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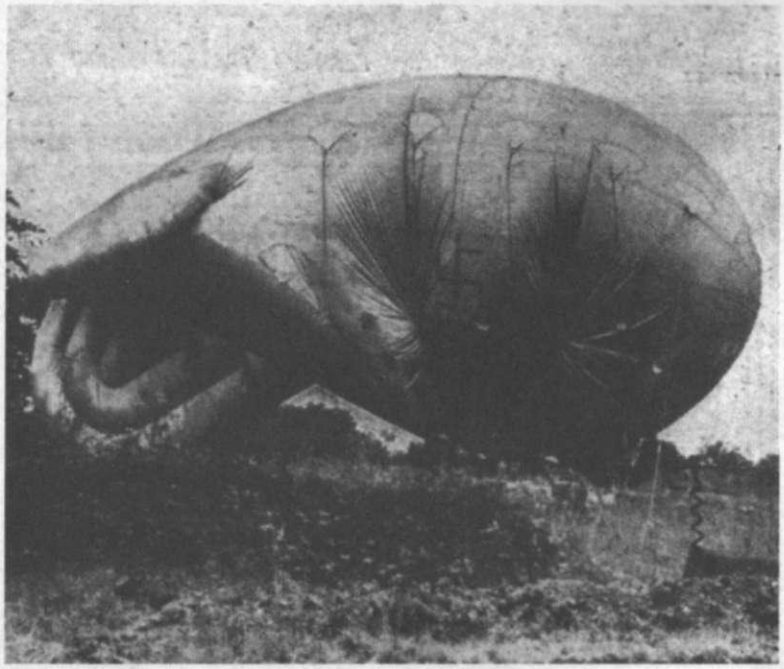
Edited by Sir John Hammerton

SIXPENCE SEPTEMBER 15, 1944

BRITISH AND CANADIANS JOINED UP IN NORMANDY when armoured cars of a Canadian reconnaissance unit, driving hard from south to south-east of Caen, contacted advanced British troops after the successful crossing of the River Orne during the night of August 7, 1944. The offensive, preceded by a terrific air bombardment, was part of a vast sweeping movement which trapped the bulk of the German 7th Army in the Falaise "pocket." See also illus. pp. 271-273. *Photo, British Newspaper Pool*

NO. 190 WILL BE PUBLISHED FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 29

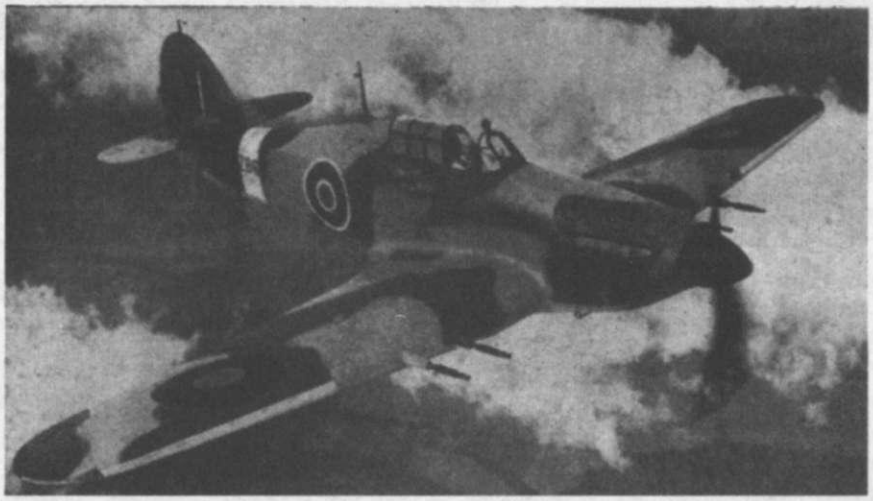
Victory Sidelights seen by Our Roving Camera



MAGNETS were used to salvage thousands of screws (above) scattered in the wreckage of a factory hit by a flying bomb. Grounded for overhaul, a flying bomb "killer" records in swastikas painted on its side (top right) the number it has intercepted and caused to crash harmlessly.

TWO-WAY TRAFFIC is a familiar sight at South Coast ports. While R.A.M.C. personnel wait to embark for France, newly-landed prisoners queue up for trains to internment camps: at the port where this photograph (below) was taken 10,000 had been landed up to August 17, 1944.

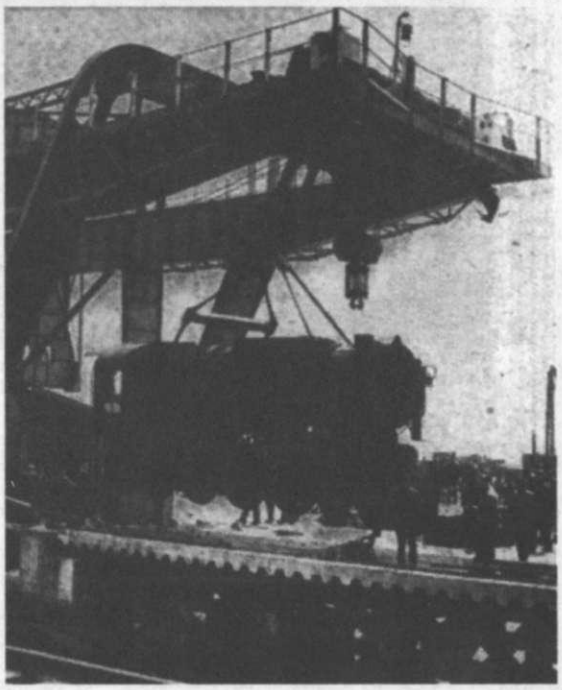
Photos, British Official, Daily Herald



LAST HURRICANE to be produced (manufacture of this particular type ceased in August 1944), this fighter (left), named "The Last of the Many," is piloted by Group Capt. Bulman, who tested the first Hurricane to take the air in 1935. These famous aircraft, together with Spitfires, made history in the Battle of Britain in 1940.

U.S. LOCOMOTIVES, which for a time hauled British goods trains, were hoisted (below) in full working order, on to cross-Channel boats for shipment to France; a few hours after landing they were in service in the Cherbourg peninsula. (See also p. 238, Vol. 7).

Photos, New York Times Photos, Daily Mirror, British Newspaper Pool



ALLIED COMMANDERS, in a hayfield in France on August 21, 1944, discussed next moves against the stricken enemy. Back view, left to right, Generals Crerar, Dempsey, Montgomery, Bradley and Hodges.
Photos, British Official

THE BATTLE FRONTS

by Maj.-Gen. Sir Charles Gwynn, K.C.B., D.S.O.

SINCE I last wrote, great events have followed each other at a bewildering pace. The liberation of Paris politically and sentimentally if not strategically is certainly the greatest, and the fact that it was liberated by the French themselves is an additional reason for rejoicing. The possession of such a great road and rail centre will send to accelerate the development of General Eisenhower's plans.

Some time ago I suggested that once Rommel was forced from his anchorage at the base of the Cherbourg peninsula the war would enter on a new and mobile phase. I admit, however, that I never expected that it would develop with such rapid and devastating results. I had not allowed for the complete mechanization of the American Third Army, nor even been certain that it would appear on the Normandy battlefields. Much less did I expect the Germans to make the enormous blunder of allowing themselves to be caught in a pocket when their gambling counter-attack towards Avranches had obviously failed. That blunder may not have altered the results of the war, but it has certainly greatly hastened the complete disruption of the German western front.

The inner Falaise pocket has now been liquidated, and such troops that escaped from it are, as I write, being exterminated in the outer pocket formed on the south bank of the Seine. A fair number may have escaped across the river; but disorganized, and having lost the greater part of their transport and heavy equipment, they can be in no state to meet General Patton's armoured columns which have already crossed the Seine west of Paris. The disaster which befell what was Rommel's Army involved the best and most mobile troops of the other German armies in France which von Kluge sent to its assistance. In actual losses of men and material the disaster is on the Stalingrad scale, and it is the more catastrophic since the army destroyed represents a much higher proportion of the troops on the western front than Von Paulus' Army did on the eastern front.

RESULTS achieved by the armies under Gen. Montgomery's command have been of themselves sufficient to disrupt the whole German outer defences in the west, and the landing of General Patch's armies in the south and the great achievements of the French Forces of the Interior make it doubtful whether the Germans will save enough from the wreck to enable them to rally on their original west wall. The Maginot Line, even if its works have been reversed to face westward, and the Siegfried Line, will not prove impregnable unless adequate numbers of good troops are available to hold them.

There can be no doubt that the Normandy battle was responsible for the disorganization of German defensive plans that enabled General Patch's armies to land with comparatively light opposition. The landing was, however, so admirably planned and executed that no delay occurred in getting material ashore and in building up the bridge-head. The conditions were, of course, vastly different from those in Normandy, where not only was stiff resistance encountered but where it was necessary to secure a defensive position on which a major counter-stroke could be met, and within which preparation for far-reaching offensive action could be made. Weather conditions were also obviously very different in the Channel from those of the Mediterranean in summer. All the conditions when the new landing took place called for rapid and bold offensive action, and General Patch seized his opportunity without hesitation.

THE capture of Marseilles, isolation of Toulon and advance to Grenoble within a week give proof of the energy he displayed. There is every reason to believe that the landing of stores and heavy equipment will be able to keep pace with his advance, especially as the Port of Marseilles and railways leading from it have probably not been extensively damaged. If he can maintain the pace of his original thrusts—and, with the action of the French Forces of the Interior greatly reducing the power of the Germans to delay him, that is not improbable—there is every hope that he will be able to join hands with Montgomery's right wing before any large numbers of the Germans in Southern France escape encirclement.

If the situation of the Germans in France is desperate the situation on their eastern front is equally serious, despite the temporary relief their counter-attacks have given them. Their armies isolated in the Baltic States have little chance of escape, and with the defection of Rumania and the resumption of the Russian offensive towards the Danube, their troops in the islands of the Levant and throughout the Balkan countries are in an even worse predicament: Kesselring's armies in Italy have lost one escape and supply route and will find it difficult to disengage if they attempt to retreat.

Even before the attempt on Hitler's life I was convinced that the majority of the generals of the regular Reichswehr realized the war was lost and were looking for a way to bring it to a speedy end. To prolong the struggle until, and after, Germany itself had been invaded (as Hitler declares he will do) would mean exposing the country not only to the devastation caused by an ever intensifying air attack but to the even greater devastation resulting from resistance on land.

I do not believe that many generals were actually involved in the plot against Hitler, and in any case, with the Reichswehr engaged in the fighting on the outer defensive perimeter, it would have been difficult to ensure sufficient force to crush Hitler's supporters by a military coup d'etat. The warning Hitler has received probably makes it all the more difficult to stage a military revolt without a civil war on a great scale, and one in which the issue would be uncertain owing to the quality of the S.S. troops and their fanatical loyalty to Hitler.

On the other hand I cannot believe that, so long as they commanded troops still capable of fighting, German generals would ever take the responsibility of seeking an armistice without the authority of a central Government. That would be contrary to their conception of discipline and be held to tarnish the honour of the Reichswehr, which must be protected at all costs. Is there any escape from this obvious dilemma? I suggest that the generals may have found one which would satisfy their idea of honour, hasten the end and save Germany from the worst consequences of invasion. We have seen them flinging their last reserves into violent and costly counter-attacks on the frontiers of East Prussia, on the Vistula and in France; counter-attacks which cannot achieve more than temporary results.

THE expenditure of reserves they entail fits in badly with Hitler's determination to maintain the struggle, buying time with space till the innermost ring of resistance is reached. It would, however, fit in with the conception that the inevitable surrender should take place outside the limits of the Fatherland, and thus involve only invasion by armies of occupation. I should, therefore, not be surprised if the generals refuse to retire across the German frontiers but will fight it out beyond them, till their troops, as at Stalingrad, are incapable of fighting any longer and survivors surrender piecemeal. Such a policy would, of course, entail the destruction of the Army: but it might be claimed on the one hand that it would save its honour, and on the other that it would save the Fatherland from the devastating effects of continued resistance within its borders. It would certainly shorten the final death struggle.

Over the broad Seine Allied Tanks Thundered

WEST OF PARIS, U.S. Army engineers rapidly constructed a pontoon bridge (top). Jubilant crowds assembled outside Chartres cathedral as Allied flags were hoisted on the spire (left); the city, 55 miles south-west of Paris, was freed on August 17. The map (right) shows the changing scene in France up to August 25; arrows indicate Allied thrusts. *Photos, Keystone. Map, Daily Express*

Here are Nazi Prisoners Coming in at the Double

"THE END OF THE WAR is in sight," declared Gen. Montgomery on Aug. 21, 1944. Prisoners came in thick and fast and "at the double" (top). Citizens of Deauville, seaside resort on the Channel coast, freed on August 22, gave thanks to their liberators (left). A helping hand was appreciated by this old lady of Falaise (above). *Photos, British Newspaper Pool*

THE WAR AT SEA

by **Francis E. McMurtrie**

COMMAND of the sea enabled the Allies to land in the south of France on August 15, 1944, and so cut off the escape of the majority of the enemy forces to the west of the Rhone. Knowledge of this and similar facts must inevitably weaken the morale of more distant German garrisons, such as those in the islands of the Aegean (see illus. p. 269). Now that Rumania and Bulgaria have changed sides, their line of communication with Germany through Greece, Albania and Yugoslavia is wearing extremely thin, and a landing in force on the Dalmatian coast would soon cause it to snap. It does not necessarily follow that such a landing will be effected just yet, for it may be found simpler to fasten upon the enemy's communications by sea with Greece. In any case, attacks by Allied surface warships, submarines and aircraft are likely to be intensified in the present situation.

In Norway the German position is equally unhappy. Patriots there are taking advantage of the situation by organizing sabotage on a large scale. One recent achievement of this kind was the destruction of a large depot in Oslo containing 50 aircraft, twice as many aeroplane engines, large stocks of spare parts and quantities of irreplaceable tools. Considerable supplies of explosives must be in the hands of the Norwegians for such a coup to have been possible.

ANOTHER proof of growth of the resistance movement is that many students threatened with conscription for forced labour in Germany have taken to the mountains, whence they wage guerilla warfare against the hated enemy. This must make things very uncomfortable for the second-rate German troops who now garrison Norway, composed chiefly of old men, boys, and men who have been rejected for general service on account of various ailments and disabilities. A proportion of these are said to be suffering from melancholia. All the sound troops have been withdrawn to bolster up the crumbling fronts elsewhere.

IN the Baltic, German efforts to effect a "Dunkirk" withdrawal from Estonia do not appear to be prospering. A considerable number of enemy vessels have been sunk by the Soviet Navy's light forces and aircraft in the Gulf of Finland, including an entire division of destroyers of the so-called "Elbing" type. These are ships of 1,100 tons, with a main armament of four 4·1-in. guns each. Further fighting may be expected in this quarter.

For German vessels in the Black Sea, escape appears now to be impossible. They include a few small submarines, some motor-torpedo-boats and motor-launches, and a number of local craft which have been armed and fitted out as patrol vessels. Though a few contrived to pass through the Bosphorus and Dardanelles disguised as merchantmen, directly Turkey's attention was drawn to the matter egress was barred for the rest.

Some of the German craft in French ports on the Bay of Biscay have already given up hope of escaping and have been interned at the Spanish port of Pasajes. Vessels at Havre and Dieppe have tried to get away to the northward under cover of darkness, only to be intercepted by Allied naval forces and aircraft. Those that were not sunk had to seek such shelter as could be found, some running into small fishing harbours and others beaching themselves. Probably valuable material and personnel were being carried in some of these vessels, few of which are likely to find their way back to Germany.

IN this connexion curiosity was aroused by the mention in an official communiqué of a British destroyer named Retalick. No destroyer of this name had before been reported to exist; and it would seem on the face of it to be a name more appropriate to one of the American-built frigates of the "Captains" class, to which it is possible she may in fact belong. How many of these frigates are actually in service is not known, but the names of more than 30 have now been released officially on this side of the Atlantic; and from references in the American Press their total number is believed to be not less than 100. Some are propelled by steam turbine engines, others by Diesels. Armed with 4-in., 40-mm. and 20-mm. guns, together with a plentiful supply of depth charges, they have accomplished much useful work as convoy escorts in the North Atlantic.

With the fall of Toulon the French Navy has regained control of its most important naval base. The dockyard is an extensive one, with dry docks capable of accommodating the largest warships in the French Fleet. How many of the numerous ships in the yard will be found in serviceable condition is uncertain at the time of writing, as the majority were scuttled, set on fire or otherwise badly damaged by their own officers and men to prevent their being made use of by the Germans in November 1942. The sister battleships Dunkerque and Strasbourg, of 26,500 tons, each mounting eight 13-in. guns, are the most valuable units. One if not both have since received further damage in action with Allied bombers, so it is uncertain whether they can be made seaworthy in a reasonable time. Probably both will need to be extensively reconstructed.

TOULON a Great Asset to the French Navy

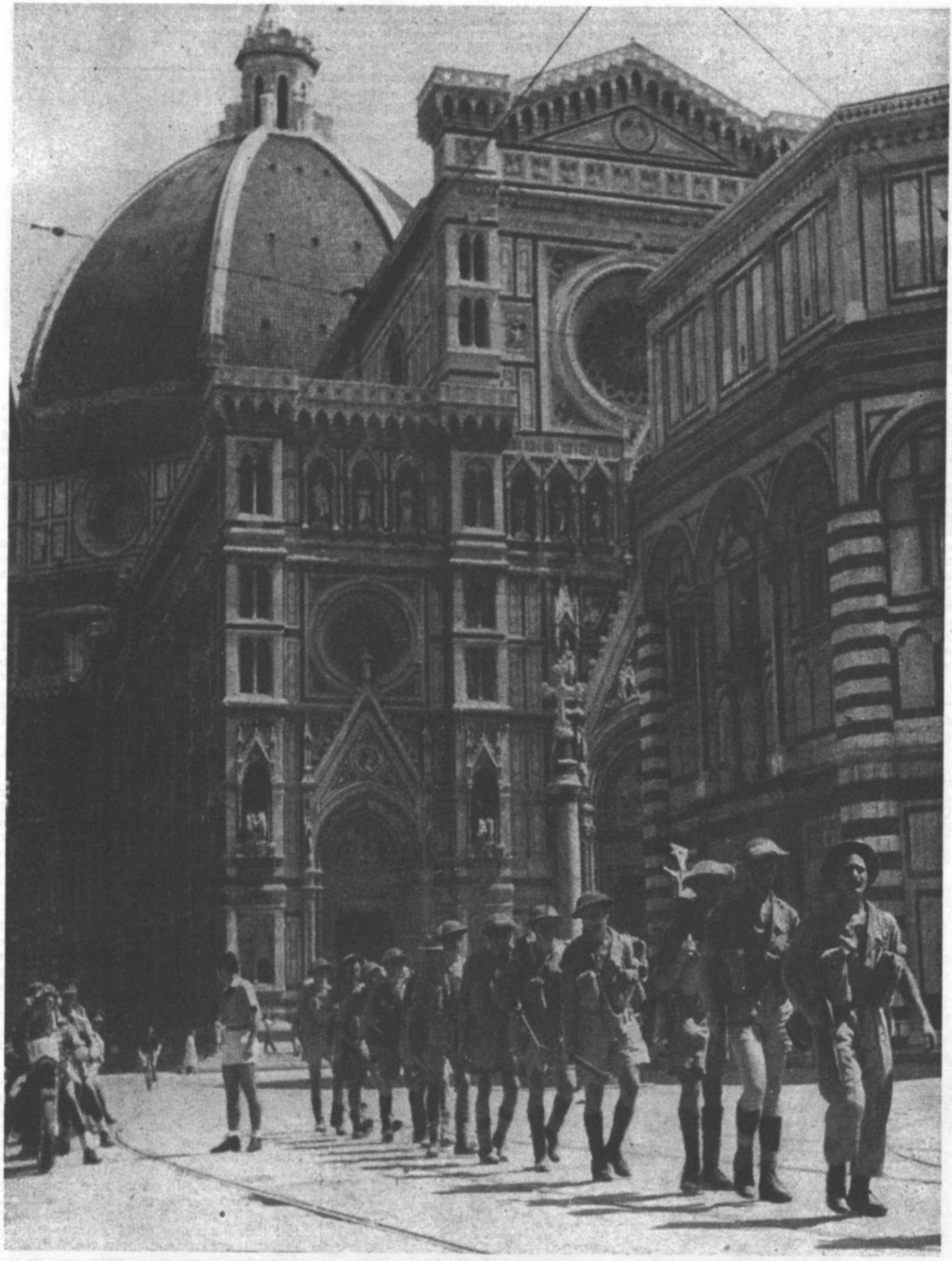
There are seven cruisers, few of which are likely to be useful at present. Four are ships of 10,000 tons armed with 8-in. guns; these are the Algérie, Dupleix, Foch and Colbert. The remaining three are the 7,600-ton Jean de Vienne, La Galissonière and Marseillaise, all armed with 6-in. guns. How many destroyers are in the port is uncertain, but the number is estimated to be between 20 and 30. Some of these are known to have been repaired and put into service by the Germans. They vary in size from 2,569 tons to 1,319 tons, and in speed from 37 to 33 knots. There are believed to be over 20 submarines, of from 1,379 to 548 tons. Some of these again have probably been appropriated by the enemy, and may have been lost or taken elsewhere.

Fleet auxiliaries include the seaplane carrier Commandant Teste, of 10,000 tons, and the netlayer Le Gladiateur, of 2,293 tons. There are also three old battleships dating from before the last war, the Provence, L'Ocean and Condorcet. The two latter were removed from the effective list some time ago and adapted for use as harbour training ships. How much further injury the Germans may have inflicted on these ships before surrendering is another problem. No doubt they have done their best to render the dry docks useless by blowing up the pontoons and wrecking the pumping plant.

After taking all this into account, the regaining of a naval port such as Toulon gives the French Navy an asset of much value. Up to now the only useful bases under its own flag in the Mediterranean were Bizerta, Oran and Algiers.

STATIONS MANNED, this M.T.B., with recognition sign white-painted on its deck, leaves for another spell of Channel patrol—shepherding Allied ships to and from the French coast. Motor-torpedo-boats of the Light Coastal Forces of the Royal Navy contribute in no small measure to the success of our landings on enemy-occupied shores. **See also p. 501, Vol. 7.**

A New Chapter Opens in the Story of Florence



FREED ENTIRELY FROM GERMAN OPPRESSION by August 22, 1944, the people of Florence thrilled to the sight of men of the 8th Army passing through the city. In the background is Il Duomo, fourth largest church in the world, dating from 1298. On August 11 officials of AMGOT (Allied Military Government of Occupied Territory) had crossed from the south bank of the river Arno, which divides the city, to the north bank, with food for the civilians. Except for five of its famous bridges, this famous Italian city escaped serious destruction, but in streets and buildings German snipers remained active for several days.

Photo, British Official

Craft that Land our Men on Enemy Beaches

"We will fight on the beaches . . ." said Mr. Churchill when in those dark hours of 1940 invasion threatened England. Fate decreed that they should be not of this country but of enemy territory. Inseparable from Allied landings on the coasts of France and Italy and elsewhere is an astonishing variety of vessels, described by ALEXANDER DILKE. See also illus. pp. 656-657, Vol. 7.

THE first experimental models of our landing craft were tried out in the Clyde in pre-war days, Britain being the pioneer of these adjuncts to large-scale invasion. In the years that have passed since those first squat little vessels chugged in Scottish waters, hundreds of shipyards in Britain, Canada, the United States and other countries have been building more and more landing craft, of different types.

Today the United Nations have great armadas of these vessels. Figures are secret, but Mr. Donald Nelson has mentioned the production of 20,000 vessels of fifteen special types already built, with 80,000 landing craft as the total of the programme, these figures being for the U.S.A. alone. Britain has built thousands of landing craft also, using small yards on estuaries and "forgotten" ports and prefabrication on a great scale.

Learning to Put a Ship Ashore

Britain also has trained the sailors to man the landing craft, most of them "hostilities only" men, whose work before the war was quite unrelated to the sea—bus drivers, factory hands, farmers, and so on. Perhaps when they expressed a preference for the Royal Navy, many of them expected to serve on a battleship or in a submarine. But the insatiable demand for experienced sailors for destroyers, and other ships on convoy duty, meant that the "amphibious navy" had to be built up from men who were newcomers. They have been trained at a hundred little places round our coasts and have learned to handle their craft in all kinds of weather. Their chief task is to do what seamen ordinarily spend their lives trying to avoid—put their ship ashore.

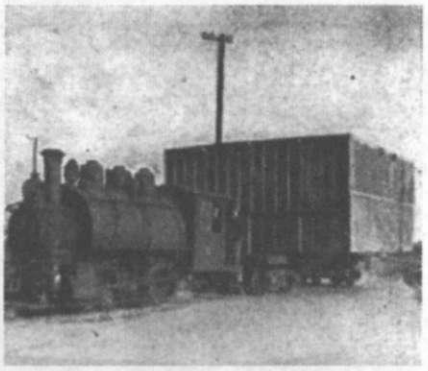
LANDING craft are flat-bottomed, square-bowed and of shallow draught. They have to be most things which the ordinary deep-water sailor would consider bad. Some of the types of landing craft and many of their details are secret. But it is possible to give interesting information that shows we have developed what is virtually a new form of warfare, as revolutionary in its way as the tank warfare developed in the 1914-18 war.

There are the amphibious craft, equally at home on land and water; the small landing boats, not capable of a long sea voyage and carried close to the scene of action on larger vessels; landing craft tanks and landing craft men which can be grounded to pour out their loads of men, tanks and vehicles through their bows which let down to form ramps; and there are the big transports. An invasion fleet implies an immense variety of vessels. Standing off the beaches are warships of all kinds laying down covering fire.

EXPERIENCE has shown the need for landing craft to protect themselves, and there are a number of specialized ones. They have their own smoke apparatus, and can call upon the fast motor-gunboats if necessary. Some barges are crammed with A.A. weapons which can be continuously in action. Others, used in Pacific landings, carry rocket guns. Where an ordinary gun's recoil would necessitate a large ship and heavy mountings, the non-recoiling rocket missile can be fired from a small vessel. The craft can thus give cover to the men they are landing.

Most novel of the amphibious vehicles is the Duck, or to be correct DUKW. The popular name is a "happy accident"; coincidence made the factory serial letters for a boat, a lorry-body and a lorry-chassis into DUKW. The Duck has at the rear a double set of wheels between which is fitted a propeller which can be engaged by the driver, some of its motive power when in the water also being derived from the treads of the wheels, which are kept turning. With this heavy load the engine must remain in low gear while the Duck is in the water, but it gets up a speed of several knots and is perfectly controllable. The Ducks proved themselves in the Sicily landings, and since.

The enormous advantage of the Duck is that it goes straight ashore with its load. Men, ammunition and stores do not have to be transferred at the beaches; the Duck can drive straight on with its load to the battle lines. It cannot, of course, make a long sea voyage, but must be dropped from a large ship near the beaches. The Ducks go aboard under their own power, fully loaded, are carried close to the scene of action and then launched by methods that remain secret. Basically they are U.S. six-wheel trucks modified to make them float. They



PREFABRICATED SECTION of an L.C.I. (Landing Craft Infantry) on the railway from an American factory to the shipyard for final assembly. *Photo, Associated Press*

are now being built by the thousand, and are manned by the R.A.S.C. In the early days of Ducks, the leader of a V-shaped formation saw a destroyer signalling him frantically. Anxious to know what he was doing wrong, he spelled out the signal. It was a derisive "Quack! Quack!" (See p. 301, Vol. 7.)

"Invasion barges" seems a ridiculous term to apply to the L.C.T. and L.C.M., the largest of which are more than 350 tons, can take 250 men and have a range of 1,500 miles with a maximum speed of, perhaps, 18 knots. The crew required for the largest craft may be up to 35 men, and their quarters being cramped they have to "rough it." The craft is strictly functional and old ideas of shipbuilding and design went by the board to make it fit its special task. The majority are of steel, with considerable armour protection against small arms and cannon fire. One of the special difficulties encountered was mounting the compass in the all-steel structure, but this was overcome by demagnetizing.

"Alligators" in the Pacific

All our invasion craft so far described have been driven by propellers. Other methods of propulsion have been tried. At the time of the Japanese onslaught on Pearl Harbour the U.S. were experimenting with an amphibious craft whose caterpillar treads became paddles in the water, and considerable numbers were ordered. Known as "Alligators," they were subsequently used in numerous Pacific island landings. (See illus: p. 167.) One of the difficult tasks that designers have to face is the best size for invasion craft. The bigger the ship, the greater its efficiency. But big craft are more difficult to control, and they entail the risk of "many eggs in one basket." The Japanese have never used large craft and have always mixed their cargoes, carrying tanks, lorries, artillery, machine-guns and men all in one unit.

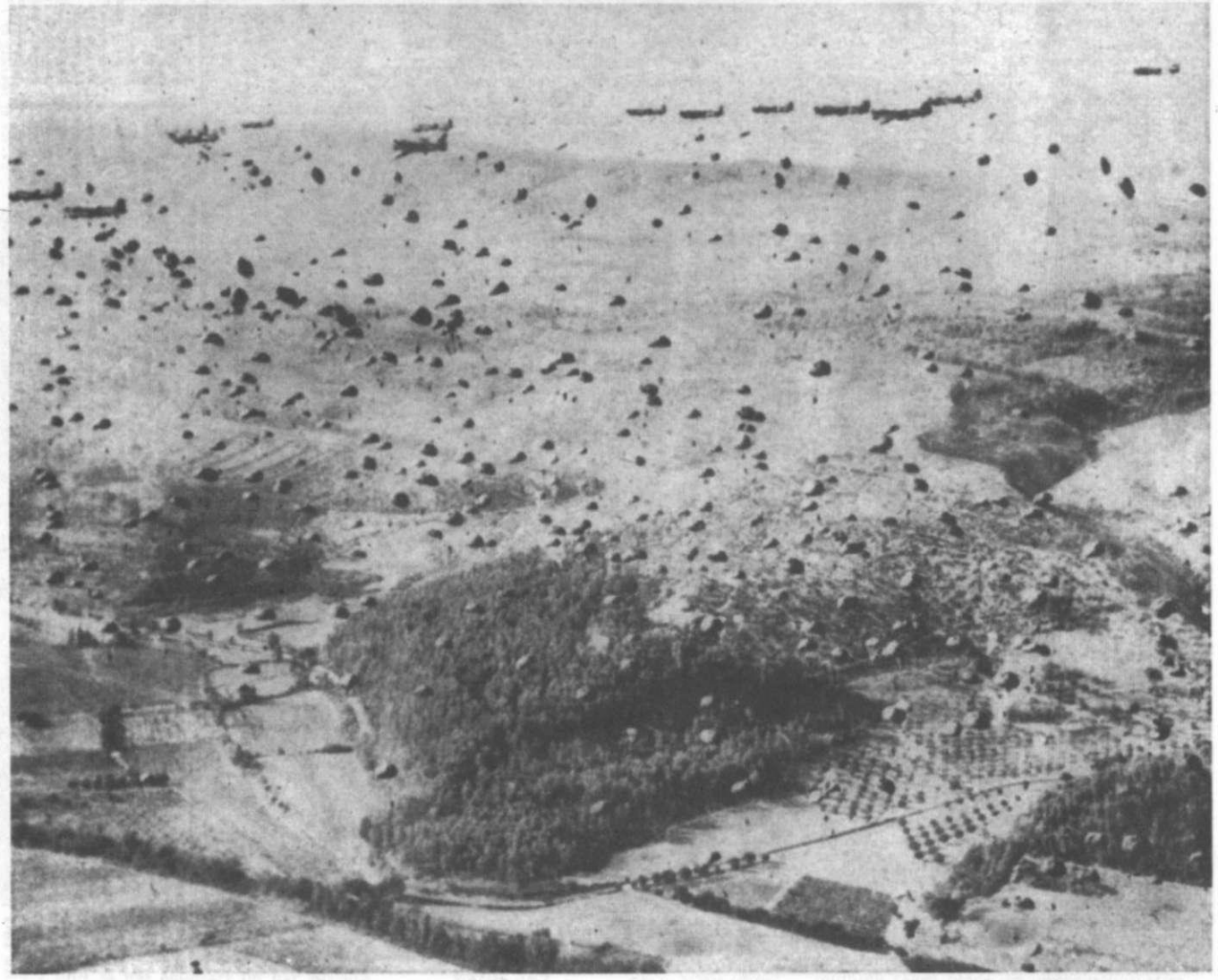
THOSE who have had to decide on the United Nations invasion craft building programme have constructed "made to measure" craft, in the right numbers and of the right type for each landing place. Admiral Luetzow, the German naval spokesman, devoting one of his latest broadcasts to the Allies' invasion navy paid high tribute to its efficiency, and he said the craft varied from 2½-ton amphibians through 18-ton landing craft and 250-ton landing barges to 5,000-ton transports carrying as many as 20 tanks. In attendance on our invasion craft are clumsy-looking but efficient landing barge kitchens (L.B.K.s); these did specially good work off the Normandy coast, as told in p. 251.

IN SOUTHERN FRANCE the first German prisoners were taken as the Allied troops landed on Aug. 15, 1944. By midnight 700 Nazis had been captured; next day they numbered over 2,000. Above, some of the startled, hatless Germans march to the beach-head. In background is a L.C.I.(L)—Landing Craft Infantry, Large—which carried some of our troops over and returned with the prisoners. *Photo, U.S. Official*

Mightily We Smote the Hun in Southern France

ANOTHER TERRIFIC BLOW TO GERMAN HOPES was dealt by the Allies on August 15, 1944, when British, U.S. and French troops made a landing in force in Southern France, on beaches between Nice and Marseilles. Before the landings were carried out, in the early morning, a formidable air force, which entailed the use of 14,000 airmen, poured down on to the German defences a cascade of bombs. At dawn hundreds of parachute troops were dropped to seize vital positions.

Lieut.-Gen. A. Patch (left), Commander of the Allied 7th Army. As the Allies moved triumphantly on, a U.S. soldier found time to hand sweets to children at a wayside house (right). An Allied patrol passes a sunken tank turret mounted with a 20-mm. gun and a machine-gun, part of the enemy defences at the coastal town of St. Raphael, which was in our hands on Aug. 17 (centre left). Parachute troops descend in mass on strategic key-points (bottom). *Photos, U.S. Official, Keystone, Associated Press*



88-mm. MOBILE PART-ARMOURED DUAL PURPOSE GUN.
PANZER-NEBELWERFER MULTI-BARRELLED ROCKET GUN.
MOBILE ARMOURED ANTI-AIRCRAFT GUN.
ARMOURED AMBULANCE ON SEMI-TRACKED CHASSIS.
MOBILE LIGHT ANTI-AIRCRAFT GUNS.
"BUMBLE BEE" 15-cm. MOBILE GUN-HOWITZER ON MARK IV CHASSIS.
7·5-cm. ASSAULT GUN ON MARK III TANK CHASSIS.
"HORNET" MOBILE 88-m/m GUN ON MARK IV TANK CHASSIS.
"TIGER" MARK VI(2) TANK WITH ENLARGED TURRET. WEIGHT 60 TONS. MAX. SPEED 28 M.P.H.
88 m/m "FERDINAND" (OR "ELEPHANT") MOBILE GUN.
ARMOURED TRACTOR.
MOBILE STEEL PILL-BOX IN TOW.
ELECTRICALLY PROPELLED AND CONTROLLED "BEETLE" EXPLOSIVE TANK.
"BEETLE" CONTROL CABLE.
PILL-BOX IN POSITION.
MARK V "PANTHER" TANK. MAX. SPEED 30 M.P.H. WEIGHT 45 TONS.
"B-4" EXPLOSIVE TANK. THE DRIVER LEAVES VEHICLE ON NEARING ENEMY LINES. AFTERWARDS IT IS RADIO-CONTROLLED.
"WASP" 10-cm. ASSAULT GUN MOUNTED ON K.W.II CHASSIS.
G.H. DAVIS 1944

GERMANY'S ARMOURED VEHICLES, employed without success to stop the Allied advances in France, include a wide range of types. On almost every occasion the British and American forces, meeting the most formidable weapons the enemy could produce—some of them admittedly most ingenious—vanquished the war machines on which the Nazis pinned their hopes.

Apart from one or two freak weapons, which lasted little longer than their initial try-out in the field, all types of German armour used in France and elsewhere are shown in the sketches in this page.

Bulwark of German tank strength consists of the semi-obsolete **Mark IV**; the very manoeuvrable **Mark V Panther**, with a 75-mm. gun; and the 60-ton **Mark VI (2) Tiger**, which has a powerful 88-mm. gun (originally an anti-aircraft gun) with an extreme range of 16,000 yards, although its accurate knock-out range is much less—some 4,000 to 5,000 yards. The 88-mm. gun is matched by the famous British fast-firing and hard-hitting 17-pounder, now mounted on a high proportion of Sherman tanks. Another German 88-mm. type of armoured vehicle is the Ferdinand mobile gun, and there is the 88-mm. Hornet; also the 7·5-cm. assault gun on a **Mark III** tank hull, the 10-cm. howitzer Wasp, and the Bumble Bee, with its 15-cm. gun-howitzer on a **Mark IV** chassis.

Perhaps the most interesting pieces of German armour—apart from the Beetle explosive tank, which is electrically controlled towards its target by means of a long cable, and its larger version, the **B-4**, which is man-driven as close as possible and then radio-controlled—are the mobile pill-box, which is towed upside down on detachable wheels and then, turned right way up, is sunk into the ground wherever required, and the **Panzer-Nebelwerfer** multi-barrelled rocket gun, which has also an ordinary mortar version. (See illus. p. 724, Vol. 7.)

Many German tanks have been found abandoned because of lack of fuel. Destruction by the Allies of railways forces the enemy to bring up their armour by road, with consequent wastage of fuel and a shortening of the combat life of the vehicle; a heavy tank consumes about one gallon of fuel per mile, and engine replacement or complete overhaul is essential after 600 miles.

Drawn by G. H. Davis, and reproduced by courtesy of The Illustrated London News

'Magic Carpets' Help to Keep our Forces Moving

Bogged vehicles and grounded aircraft are millstones around the neck of an army ; if its transport ceases to flow, offensive action becomes impossible and defence a matter of uncertainty. How perplexing ground-problems have been ingeniously solved for our forces in France and elsewhere, by the provision of portable roads and airstrips, is explained by Lieut.-Col. R. M. LESTER.

As our armies advance towards Hitler's inner lines of defence, portable roads and aircraft runways are being laid in forward positions, thus enabling our tanks and other vehicles to move over the worst kind of ground, and our aircraft to land on and take off from advanced bases. Tremendous use was made in North Africa, Sicily and Italy of these "magic carpets," and on them we were operating Allied aircraft from the Normandy beach-head shortly after D-Day. Before the end of the first day of our landing in France our armoured vehicles and lorries were moving along these portable roads.

THIS was made possible by the development of what is known as Sommerfeld Track, the principle of which is that of a spider's web, as already roughly copied by man in the tennis racket. It is a light metal carpet made of wire netting strips, reinforced with steel bars. The engineers lay it in rolls of 25 yards, about 10½ feet wide, with loops at the edges. For aircraft runways widths are linked together by threading the steel bars through the marginal loops ; then a bull-dozer or caterpillar tractor stretches the whole thing taut, the runway then being fastened to the ground by steel spikes driven at the outer edges. Although the landing strip has not the usual hard surface it is perfectly adequate for heavy aircraft.

The material is so light and portable that a runway can be carried in eighteen 12-ton lorries ; the material for a concrete runway of the same dimensions would need 2,500 such lorries. Thus considerable economy in transport is effected. The first of these runways was tried out on an English down-land during an Army exercise without any preparation other than levelling the site. Just before this war experiments had been carried out in Palestine, and these were continued, after the outbreak of war, in a small country garden in England. Early in 1940 the Army authorities carried out tests, and this material of light weight, in easily portable loads, was found to be admirably suited to the purpose. So production was started, at first in a small workshop, later on a rapidly expanding scale in the factories.

Extricating Bogged Bombers

In 1941 the first operational track was laid at a fighter station, and it is still in use and giving every satisfaction. Attention was turned meanwhile to the production of special tools that would help to reduce the time taken in laying the track. It was early in 1942 that selected units of the Royal Air Force succeeded in laying a track in 11¾ hours. The next development was that of wooden flexboards, on the principle of continuous duckboarding ; these are laid as wheel tracks, transversely arranged, and held closely together with steel bands which are secured through the timber, the ends of these bands being formed into loops and welded.

The boards are flexible, to suit uneven ground, and can bridge small gaps and holes. Heavy lorry loads can be transported over grass runways on airfield construction jobs by making use of these boards, and no wheel ruts are left in the grass. The R.A.F. uses them for extricating bogged bombers, and for aircraft standings. A great advantage is that they can be removed from site to site as required, for use over and over again.

ON D-Day, as transports reached the Normandy beaches Royal Engineers were ready to perform their particular task without further orders. Sappers and pioneers leapt overboard with their pickets and sledge-hammers and started unrolling the first twenty-five-yard strip of Sommerfeld Track. With our fighters and anti-aircraft batteries giving cover protection, lorries were slowly moving along the tracks as they were laid out. These were linked up with the nearest permanent roads, and soon tanks and other vehicles were proceeding in great convoys. Ducks — our amphibious carriers — ran straight out of the sea up these newly laid tracks, sometimes negotiating steep inclines. They were each carrying over two tons of bombs, for the use of our aircraft in their task of blocking the enemy's lines of communication.

Four Canadians, flying Spitfires, were the first pilots to land there. A captain of the Royal Engineers was in charge of a unit at work on the airfield, which they had set up in about 36 hours. They had been training, of course, for this work for many months, becoming as proficient in track drill as an infantryman in platoon drill. Every hour found the airfield nearer completion, and when the pilots landed there again the following morning it was fully equipped for servicing aircraft and for carrying out minor repairs.

Swamp Converted to Airfield

It is possible to overcome the problem of marshy ground by laying a matting under the track. As an example of how the greatest difficulties in this direction can be speedily overcome, there is the case of a piece of ground near the Volturno River, in Italy, which our Engineers found to be little more than a swamp. Yet in a matter of hours they had levelled the ground, laid out the rolls of steel matting, and converted it into a fully serviceable airfield.

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT, in a message to Congress, stated that—among other material—44,500,000 yards of Sommerfeld Track had been received by the United States from Britain under Reverse Lend-Lease. There is no doubt that this is one of the outstanding inventions which has made possible our invasion of Europe. What would we not have given to have had such facilities in the last war, when we recollect the endless bogging of vehicles in the appalling mud of the Somme ! In Viscount Allenby's campaign, too, the problem of transporting vehicles over the desert sand was a very serious one, and sheep hurdles were put down to form as firm a surface as possible. The Germans in the last war requisitioned all the curtains they could get hold of in East Prussia, nailed them to wooden frames and placed them on the ground in the region of the Masurian lakes, thus providing very temporary roads for their vehicles.

The "battle of the building-up" in all theatres of war owes much to these portable roads. And there is a post-war aspect of this invention : it will prove invaluable in the making of temporary roads wherever new territories are exploited, or where building takes place on unpromising sites.

THE BAYEUX BY-PASS IN NORMANDY, along which Allied transport is seen passing, was swiftly laid with the Sommerfeld Track which is described in the accompanying article. Without that ingeniously devised track, construction of the road would not have been possible in such a short time as was necessary for our advance. *Photo, British Official*

Nazis were Snatched from Albanian Stronghold

SURPRISE BLOW was struck in the early hours of July 29, 1944, when British forces, including seasoned Commandos, raided the Albanian mainland, two miles south of the village of Spilje (see map below). Land, sea and air forces co-operated in this successful venture which resulted in the overwhelming of the German garrison and contact with partisan forces in this area. It was the biggest combined operation carried out by the Allies in the Balkans, and lasted for 10 hours after the landings had been made under cover of darkness.

British sharpshooters, merged in the dense shade of a tree (1), covered the advance of comrades pushing on to the objective. With rifles strapped to his sides as emergency splints, a casualty was carried back for first-aid attention (2). Through a wood, under enemy fire, Commandos cautiously made their way forward (3). German prisoners (4) helped to carry boxes of medical supplies back to our landing-craft off the shore.

Photos, British Official

British and Greek Commandos in Aegean Raid

SHOCK TROOPS of Britain and Greece, harassing the enemy in the Aegean, hold down thousands of German soldiers and guns. On the night of July 13-14, 1944, these Commandos assaulted the Dodecanese island of Symi (see map), a few miles north of Rhodes. Landing secretly, the raiders took up positions overlooking the castle of the Knights Hospitallers and attacked at 7 a.m. By the afternoon the enemy had been overwhelmed; the entire garrison, which included Italian Fascists, was liquidated and large quantities of ammunition were destroyed.

In an emplacement overlooking Symi harbour a sergeant prepares the demolition charge for an enemy gun (1). Sappers about to go ashore to blow up German installations (2); two of their comrades, already established on the island, concealed themselves among rocks (3), covering the approach of other raiders assailing an enemy billet. One of the landing craft leaves its base ship, those left behind giving a hearty send-off (4).

Photos, British Official. Map by courtesy of The Times

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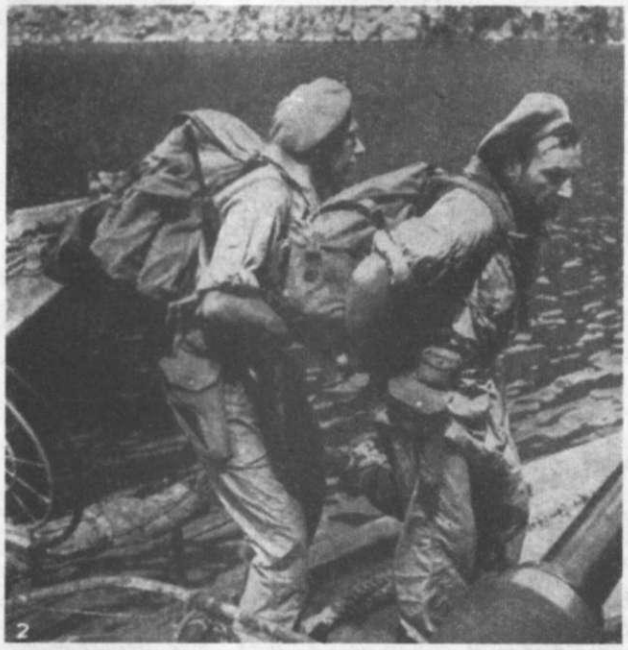
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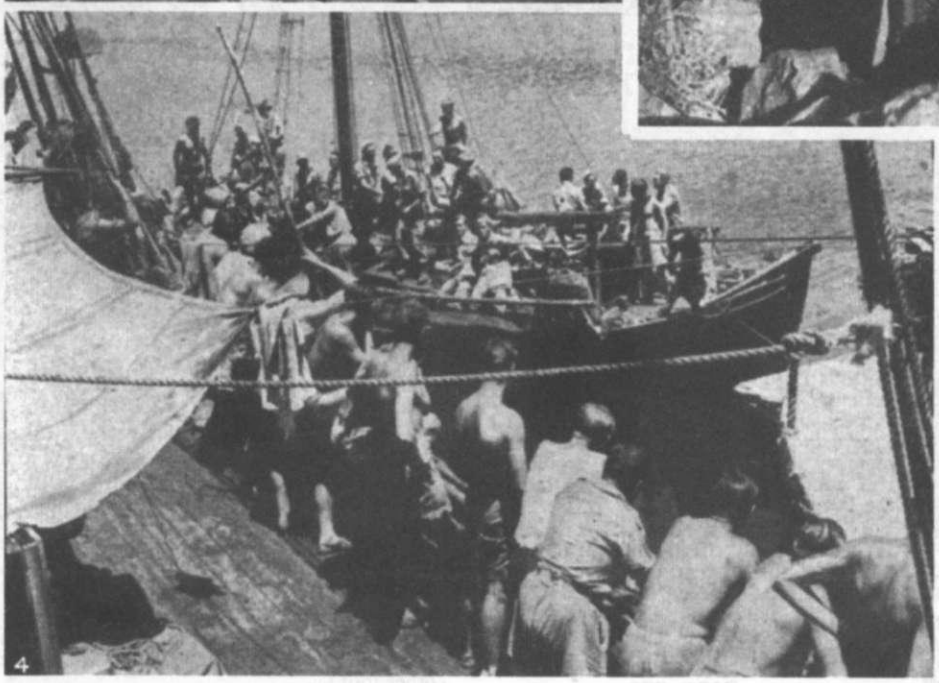
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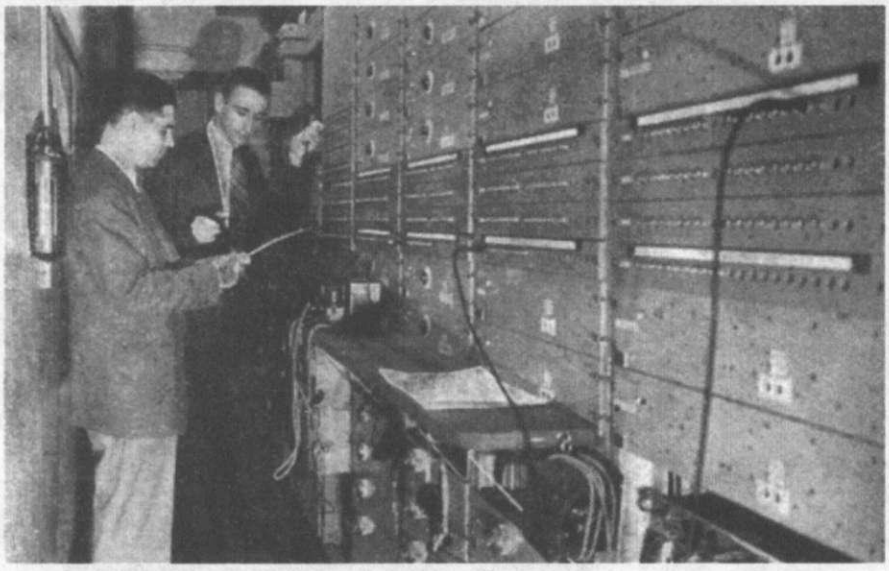
The Story Behind Britain's Vast Radio Blitz

Every hour of the 24 the air over Europe is charged with the War-Voice of Britain sent out by the B.B.C. In frantic endeavour to quell the unceasing Voice from London the Nazis are devoting more time, money, personnel and material than they are expending on their own broadcasting, as explained here by Capt. MARTIN THORNHILL, M.C.

It is doubtful if the threat of death ever deterred Europeans under the Nazi heel from listening-in to London. At any rate, Goebbels has frankly admitted the failure of the extreme penalty by setting up a Broadcasting Defence Department with dictatorial powers and summary orders to smash Britain's big radio blitz. Staffed by the best experts Germany can produce, this Department at once decided on a policy of jamming on a scale never before considered practicable.

On the orders of Berlin's "Jam Chief," regional controllers now charge the ether over Europe with a barrage of miscellaneous din which would make the uproar of the world's biggest menagerie sound like a monastery by comparison. First, programmes to be attacked are selected, then instructions are sent to hundreds of widespread jamming stations, most of which function in local Gestapo headquarters.

When the programmes start, a medley of Morse, gongs, bird screeches, loud cross-talk, musical discords, machine saws, hammers on anvils, and factory whistles fills the air. If the noise seems ineffective, the listening controllers call up still more jammers in the frantic endeavour to quell the unceasing voice from London.



ADDING ITS VOICE to the 24-hour-a-day B.B.C. broadcasts, the new radio station, A.B.S.I.E. (American Broadcasting Station in Europe), the control room of which is seen above, helps to carry the word of the Allies to those oppressed peoples not yet relieved by our military might. Broadcasting in many languages, including German, A.B.S.I.E.'s first transmission, which consisted of news bulletins and music, was on April 30, 1944. *Photo, Planet News*

THE voice? There are scores, hundreds of voices. Yet not long ago, in face of increasing Nazi victories, the best our aerial propagandists could do was to fight a stiff rearguard action. Inevitably the worsening military situation had a tragic effect on the propaganda position. There seemed little to say that would help the cause of freedom, and far too many hours a day in which to say it. We were losing everything; more important, from the publicity point of view, we were being progressively deprived of the only bases from which it might be possible to meet the enemy "on the air" on anything like equal terms.

For only on the air would it be practicable to exert any pressure on Germany or German-Europe at all. But the difficulty was, how to do it, with the Nazis in control of almost every radio station on the Continent. Full well did the Nazis realize the value of quick seizure of local wireless centres. The first "soldiers" to ride into a city were radio engineers; in a matter of hours, sometimes minutes, the transmitters were mouthing mealy quisling welcomes to the "saviours who had come to deliver the people from oppression."

BY the middle of 1942 the Nazis were boasting that their powerful controlled European network was exerting more radio influence on world opinion than that of any other country. Yet the British stood firmly by the conviction that victory could be brought nearer by months, perhaps years, by supremacy on the air. And at the end of that year our Controller of Overseas Services claimed that "Britain was nearing parity with the Axis powers," that "the United Nations as a whole could now compete with the Axis in the short-wave field." Out of a beginning with four people, broadcasting for 10 hours a day on a programme allowance of £10 a week, the service had now grown to three separate programmes broadcasting 24 hours a day in 15 languages, and employing nearly 500 people.

Today, under the very nose of the Gestapo, many thousands of the slaves of Europe listen hourly to the heralds of coming liberation in the voices of kings and queens, prime ministers, diplomats and patriots. In 24 languages on 26 wave-lengths over 600 persons wage—non-stop—the B.B.C.'s radio war on Hitler's Europe. And Hitler, himself a keen believer in radio splutter, who planned to protect his subjects against propaganda *with* propaganda, is now confronted with the memory that it was Britain's skilful use of this weapon that ruined German morale in the last war.

The first really effective use in the present conflict of this, the primary weapon in our psychological armoury, was when the excellent radio station at Bari was put into reverse against the enemy in northern Italy and throughout the Balkan peninsula. Working over 16 hours a day, Radio Bari has been relaying daily six B.B.C. broadcasts in Italian, and five American programmes, and pumping into German-held territory a daily commentary on the war, along with detailed information of German troop dispositions and instructions for sabotage.

That our control of this first-class station seriously worries the enemy is patent from his repeated but ineffectual attempts to block the transmissions, much as he jams those going out to the rest of Europe direct from the B.B.C. For the entire radio offensive is supported by intelligence work which enables us to keep strictly abreast of requirements. Trained radio scouts all over Europe counter every move of the Gestapo, and keep the B.B.C posted on day-to-day reception and listener-reaction.

It is known exactly what types of wireless sets are being used in respective areas. Easy instructions are broadcast as to how the range of the less powerful instruments can be increased so as to hear London more distinctly, and hints on how to reduce jamming. If the Germans augment their jammers, the B.B.C replies by transmitting the same programme on several separate wave-lengths.

A vital factor in building up an audience was the security of listeners. A favourite Nazi dodge was to introduce, without warning, a distinctive jamming note so that radio sleuths listening near houses can detect sets tuned in to London. Radio intelligence enables the B.B.C. to warn listeners when this expedient is imminent. In fact, this aspect of the radio offensive has reached such perfection that not only the inception of the underground movement by the V-campaign, but its rapid increase and expansion throughout Europe, has been due almost exclusively to sustained support from the B.B.C. Thousands who might never see the underground news sheets learn their contents via London radio.

OF the immense influence wielded by the Voice of Britain the B.B.C. have ready evidence, much of it from official action taken by the Nazis themselves. A certain U-boat commander returned home and reported that his and two other submarines had been attacked by British aircraft. The other U-boats, he declared, had declined to open fire, attempting to escape by submerging. But before they could do so the aircraft had swooped and sunk them both, making off when confronted by the guns of the third. The lucky captain was congratulated on his escape. But his satisfaction was short-lived. When the version put out by the B.B.C. reached German official quarters the ungallant commander was promptly court-martialled. It was his ship, not the others, that had stopped firing and had plunged to safety.

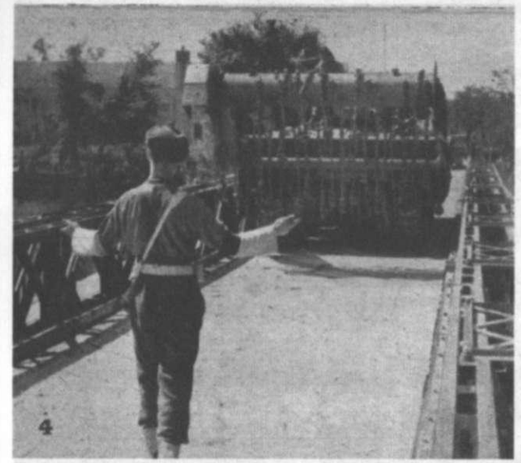
It may seem odd that Germany should have accepted London's word rather than that of one of her own nationals. But it is further proof of the faith that German as well as other listeners place in the news and propaganda coming to them from the B.B.C. If official German quarters will discredit their own news sources, preferring to rely on statements from London, how much more will the mass of the people incline to belief in British propaganda?

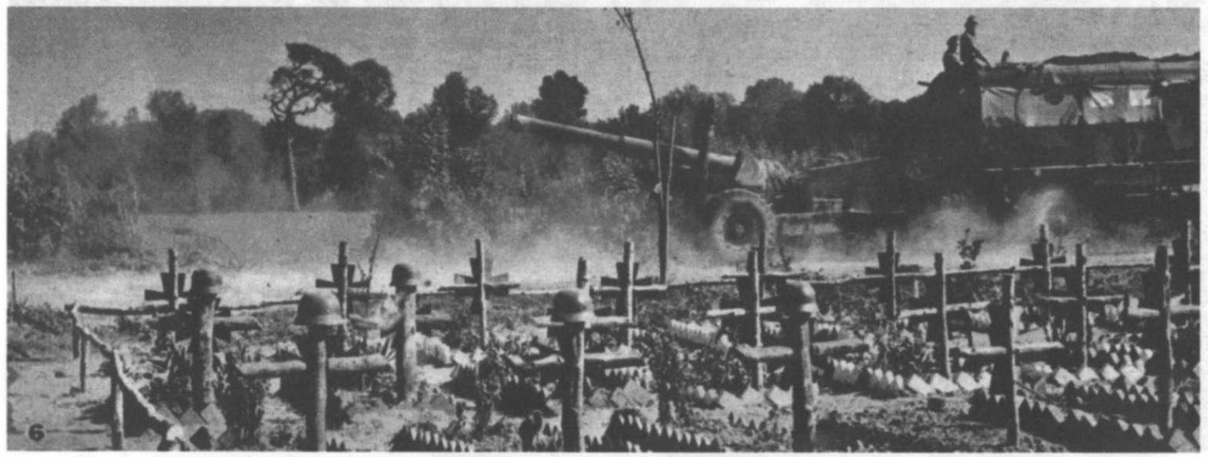
When the war was going well for Germany the truth provided Nazi propagandists with first-class material. Now the boot is on the other foot!

Photos, British Official, British Newspaper Pool

Von Kluge's 7th Army Trapped in France

British and Canadians drove a great wedge on August 8, 1944, into the enemy lines south of Caen towards Falaise—at the mouth of the "trap" wherein by August 20 part of the German 7th Army was being annihilated. Our transport and men on the Caen-Falaise road (above), with distant fires caused by 1,000 R.A.F. bombers which attacked on the previous night; below, bombs burst on German positions during the following daylight raid by 600 Fortresses.





Closing in for the 'Kill' in Normandy

Advancing on Falaise to help close the "trap," British troops liberated Aunay-sur-Odon on August 5, 1944; ten days later their armoured patrols had entered Vassy, through which our men are seen (1) moving on. British and Canadian transport on the Caen-Falaise road (2); Rocquancourt village (right) was captured on August 8. Relieving Churchills moved up to battle positions as Shermans which had been in heavy and continuous action made their way back (3) to the Vassy main road.

Photos, British Official, British Newspaper Pool, The Times, New York Times Photos

Here is Peace for the Vanquished Hun

Demolitions in the wake of the retreating enemy are countered by the speedily-erected Bailey bridge, across which a flail tank for exploding mines is being shepherded (4). On the Falaise outskirts a village was entered by Polish troops, one riding a white horse (5) captured from a German transport column trying to escape from the Normandy "trap." Before retreating the Huns buried some of their dead in elaborate graves, past which a British 5·5-in. gun rumbles (6).

Respite from Battle for Man and Beast

Photos, British Official

Indifferent to British guns and vehicles, cows amble leisurely to the milking-shed of this Normandy farm (top) around which for three weeks fighting had raged; to the watching gunners they are symbols of Home. A chance to remove the dust of conflict is jumped at by the troops; the bathe completed they line up at the mobile laundry for clean underwear (bottom)—grateful to the R.E.s who make this refreshing behind-the-lines service possible.

VIEWS & REVIEWS

Of Vital War Books

by Hamilton Fyfe

I SUPPOSE that everyone who takes any interest in the war (a surprising number of people don't) knows something about the San Demetrio, a tanker torpedoed and set on fire, abandoned by her crew, then re-manned and, after the most tremendous exertions and hardships, brought into the Clyde with five-sixths of the oil saved. Most of us read about it at the time; some of us have seen the film. (See p. 597, Vol. 3.) It is a great story, which makes one feel immensely proud to belong to the same race as the men who figured in it. But that is only one of many stories which produce the same effect and which are to be found in Capt. Frank H. Shaw's new book, The Merchant Navy at War (Stanley Paul, 12s. 6d.).

Another exploit of the same kind received next to no publicity, but was not less worthy of it. Here again a ship had to be abandoned. She seemed to be sinking; her bows were under water, her propeller revolving in the air. However, she did not sink, so next day the crew went back and made up their minds to save her. This time it was not fire but water which they had to fight. There was a huge hole in the bow, where the torpedo had struck. The stern was still sticking up. The first thing to be done was to get her on an even keel. They "worked like maniacs" for twenty-four hours, and did it. Then they had to shore up the water-tight bulkheads which kept the sea from flooding the whole ship. That too was accomplished, and then they limped home, steering with difficulty, making very few knots, an easy prey for a U-boat if there had been one about. Luckily there wasn't. For some reason the name of the vessel still has to be kept secret.

I CAN introduce you by name, however, to the British freighter Ajax, of 7,000 tons, speed ten knots. Meet also her captain, name of Adams—Capt. Elias Adams. Not a popular captain. Didn't want to be popular. Saved money wherever he could. Crew called it "cheese-paring." Adams didn't mind. When the Admiralty put a gun on board he groused, because sailors would be needed to work it, and they would have to be paid. But two of his mates qualified "Very Good Indeed" in a gunnery course, so they were given charge of the gun and the captain was pleased.

But he didn't remain pleased long. He grudged the time occupied in training a gun crew, and he did not like them being on the poop, which he had always kept to himself. He had no use for deck guns. Also he resented being told how to handle his ship when it was sailing in convoy. Altogether, Captain Adams was not having a good war.

Then one day a U-boat hit the Ajax with a shell. The gun on the poop went into action. Captain Adams became another man. They were shelling his ship. They had torn a hole in her side, they had shot away her funnel. The quartermaster at the wheel was hit. Cool in spite of his fury, the captain took the wheel and

steered as well as he could steer a motionless ship, to turn her stern towards the enemy, thus presenting a minimum target. There was a considerable swell. Several rounds were fired by Sloane, the mate, all of them failing to hit. Enemy shells fell perilously close, one fetched away the mainmast. Another set the ready-for-use ammunition near the gun on fire. There was imminent risk of a major explosion, which would have put the gun out of action and rendered the Ajax helpless. Other members of the crew dashed in and at great risk threw the threatened ammunition overboard. The fire-and-wreckage party ranged hoses and put out the flames. Sloane went on serving the gun.

At last he registered a hit on the U-boat, but it was not enough to put her out of action. She went on firing with her two guns and manoeuvred at top speed, twenty knots, to avoid being hit again. After an Ajax lifeboat had been "blown to matchwood" the mate, thinking of their chances of escape, asked if the captain was going to abandon ship. "Abandon be damned!" was the answer. "We've not started fighting yet. If I come aft to show you—— !"

Limelight on Our Merchant Navy

He did not go aft. He led a party to extinguish a fire caused by a shell. While he was engaged in this, another shell found its mark and he was wounded. He knotted a bandage round the wound, and carried on. At this point the mate made another hit on the U-boat, which lessened her speed; he followed this up by another that silenced one of her guns. The U-boat fired now only "in a desultory fashion"; but she began loosing-off torpedoes. Fortunately, the range was too great for them to take effect.

The Ajax was by now a good deal of a wreck. Without her funnel, her upper paint practically burnt off, she seemed derelict. The port wing of her bridge had gone and she was leaking in several places; but the gun remained undamaged, though the U-boat had tried to burst shrapnel over its position in the hope of putting the crew hors de combat.

As for the U-boat, only her conning-tower now showed above water. She seemed to have little fight left in her. Now was the moment to get away, for the chief engineer announced that he could give steam in spite of heavy damage to the engine-room. But the captain had no thought of escape in his mind. "Carry on shooting!" he ordered, and in a short while the Germans were seen to be abandoning ship. When eighteen were in the water there was an explosion. The U-boat blew up—nobody knew why.

The eighteen were rescued. "No one would believe we'd licked a Hun," said the captain, "unless we took back souvenirs." It was a magnificent "licking," with odds of more than two to one against the Ajax, two guns to one and twenty knots to ten.

Captain Shaw is severe, and justly so, on the neglect of precautions for the security of merchant ships between the wars. The Admiralty, "with its sublime, obsolete faith in gunnery," persisted in believing that cannon could "hit targets well under water." They gave merchant ships deck-guns as defence against submarines submerged. Had they provided depth-charge throwers and charges to be thrown, there would have been far fewer losses, Captain Shaw says.

THEN freighters were too slow for the increased speed of U-boats. They had no detector devices. They were sent often at first without escort. During the First Great War "the idea of convoys was received with considerable antagonism" by the Navy, and by merchant seamen as well. And the Admiralty put up the First Lord not long ago to tell the House of Commons that "about as many fast merchantmen had been sunk by the enemy as slow ones." Why, Captain Shaw says, did not some M.P. inquire, "How many fast ships were sailing in slow convoys?" Convoys must move at the pace of the slowest ships in them, and we have far too many slow ships.

How shamefully we neglected the Merchant Navy during those twenty years of "peace which was no peace" the book shows, with pardonable indignation. I remember seeing in the River Fal rows of ships, just rotting. The men who had been their crews and officers were rotting, too. Many ships were sold to Germany, many to Japan. "The most vital national service was ignored and neglected. There was no vision." Have we learned our lesson or shall we do the same again? The Merchant Navy ought to be recognized as part of the Royal Navy. It is absurd to keep up the barrier between the two services.

MERCHANT NAVY OFFICERS arrive at a South Coast port after completion of special duties across the Channel—each carrying his own gear, in Army packs. They have no batmen as have officers of the Royal Navy, and in the book reviewed in this page Capt. Frank H. Shaw makes a number of wise suggestions for raising the status of, and improving conditions of service in, our incomparable M.N. *Photo, British Newspaper Pool*

French Army Fights Again in its Native Land

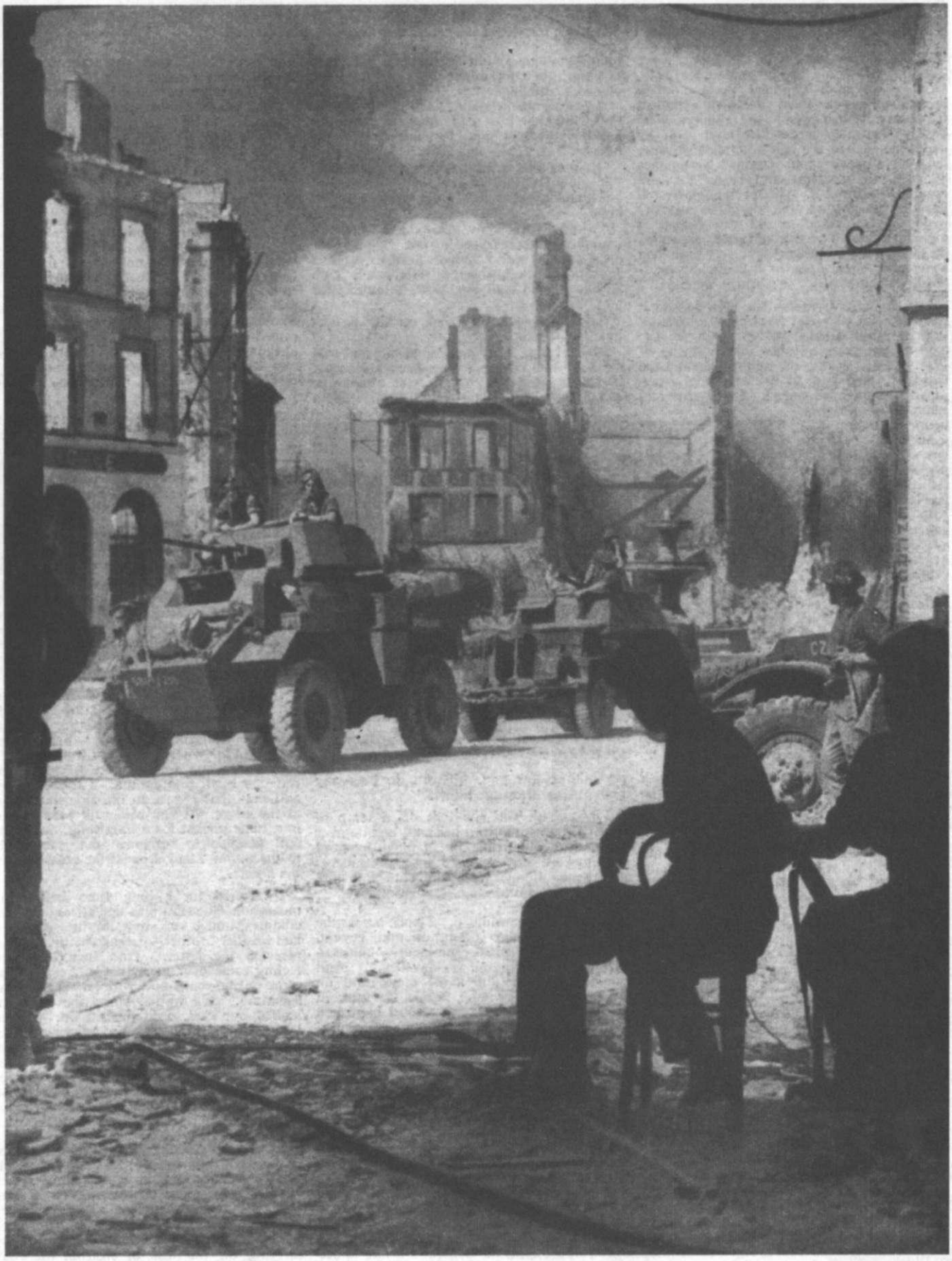
REGULAR FRENCH TROOPS were reported in action in France on August 14, 1944, fighting by the side of the Americans. They were the 2nd French Armoured Division which had been formed in North Africa in May 1943, and finally trained in England.

As proudly they drove through the streets of St. Mère Eglise (liberated on June 6, 1944), during our thrust for Cherbourg) the townspeople flocked to give them warm welcome (1). French women ambulance drivers waiting to embark for France (2).

General Jacques Phillipe Leclerc, Commander of the 2nd French Armoured Division (3); he is famed for daring desert raids he led during the North African campaign. A portrait of General de Gaulle decorates a half-track vehicle (4). Flowers were thrown by this giri as tanks rolled through her village (5). On August 25 it was announced that elements of the 2nd French Armoured Division had entered the streets of Paris.

Photos, U.S. Official, Planet News

Through Shattered Falaise Avenging Armour Sped



BIRTHPLACE OF WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR, the ancient town of Falaise, 20 miles from Caen in Normandy, from which 4,000 citizens had fled, was set ablaze by the Germans before British and Canadians occupied it on August 17, 1944. Falaise was the keypoint of the great trap which engulfed Von Kluge's army; and by the light of the fires that raged there our troops hounded down the last of the outfought garrison. British armoured cars are here seen hastening through the ruins in pursuit.

Photo, British Newspaper Pool

Before the Red Armies a Name Immortal Ran

No glamour of the front-line warrior surrounded the sapper major. Yet his name liveth for evermore in the annals of the Soviet brave ; to the death he proved how nobly they also serve who only pave the way. This vivid record, written exclusively for "The War Illustrated," is by KONSTANTIN SIMONOV, playwright and official Red Army war correspondent.

WHILE the battles on the Desna were still going on, in September 1943, we were stranded because of a breakdown at a most awkward spot—a temporary bridge which the sappers were hastily throwing across the river. It so happened that in the half-hour that we were delayed, three or four German aeroplanes attacked the crossing and began to drop bombs all around it. The working-party fell flat on the ground, but the little swarthy major in command would not permit a moment's delay ; the advance depended on them. He got the working-party to its feet again and, enemy planes still circling overhead, the building of the bridge went on.

I might have forgotten the episode had it not been for the fact that certain circumstances reminded me of it again in the days of the great advance in the spring of 1944. It was during the fighting around the Dnieper. We had to overtake the army, which had gone far ahead. Every now and again we would come upon a name that seemed fated to be our travelling companion. It was written on bits of plywood nailed to telegraph poles, on the walls of houses, or chalked on the armour of a half-wrecked enemy tank. "No mines—Saveliev," or "Road examined for mines—Saveliev," or "Skirt this area on the left—Saveliev," or "Bridge built—Saveliev." Sometimes there was just "Saveliev," and an arrow pointing ahead.

SOVIET SAPPERS day and night risk their lives to clear away land mines laid by the retreating enemy in the path of advancing Red Army forces. With their curiously-shaped detectors this group had discovered nearly 2,000 cunningly concealed explosives. The inspiring record of a sapper major is given in this page. *Photo, Pictorial Press*

It was obviously the name of the officer in command of sappers who marched with advance units and cleared the road for the army. The notices were frequent and detailed and, what was most important, thoroughly reliable. After driving 200 kilometres and seeing 20 or 30 of these notices, I suddenly remembered the swarthy little major who had commanded the bridge-building over the Desna, and it occurred to me that he might be the mysterious Saveliev, marching ahead of the troops in the role of guardian angel. When we reached the river Bug, we spent the night in a village where there was a field hospital. In the evening we gathered around the lamp and had tea with the doctors. I don't remember how it came about that I spoke of Saveliev's notices.

"Yes, we have travelled nearly 500 kilometres by those notices," the chief surgeon said. "It's a famous name in these parts. In fact, it's famous enough to send some women crazy ! Don't be annoyed with me, Vera Nikolayevna, I'm only joking." He turned to a young woman doctor, who made a gesture of protest.

"It's no joke as far as I can see," she retorted. Then, turning to me, she said : "You're going on ahead, aren't you ?" I told her that that was my intention.

"You know they make fun of what they call my superstitious feeling," she went on, "but my name is Savelieva, and I sometimes fancy that it is my brother who leaves these notices on the roads. I haven't heard anything of him since the beginning of the war. We parted in Minsk. He used to be a road-building engineer in peacetime. I keep fancying that he might be this Saveliev ; indeed I really believe he is !"

"Yes, she believes it," the chief surgeon said, "and she gets really angry because this Saveliev doesn't put his initials on the notices."

"It's very irritating," she exclaimed. "If only it said A. N.—for Alexander Nikolayevich—I'd feel quite certain about him."

"And do you know what she did once ?" the chief surgeon turned to me. "She wrote on a notice-board : 'Which Saveliev is this ? Alexander Nikolayevich ? His sister, Vera Savelieva, field mail box 1390, is looking for him.'"

"Did you write all that on the notice-board ?" I asked.

"Yes, I did. They laughed at me, and told me that the sappers come back this way. If you're going on ahead, you might ask at Divisional Headquarters. I'll write down my address for you. If you do hear any news, please drop me a line."

I promised, and she tore off a scrap of newspaper, wrote down her mail box number and held it out to me. As I put it away in my pocket she watched my movements closely, as though to make sure the note was in a safe spot.

THE offensive continued. I came across the name Saveliev often, on and beyond the Dniester. "Road examined for mines—Saveliev." "No mines—Saveliev." And sometimes again the name alone and an arrow pointing ahead. When we were in Bessarabia in April of this year, I happened to be with a rifle division, and mentioned Saveliev's name.

"Why, of course we know him. It's my sapper battalion commander Major Saveliev. A splendid sapper. You must have seen the name very often ?"

"Very often," I agreed.

"I should think so. He's the man who clears the roads for the whole army, and not only for our division. His name is known throughout the army, though very few have ever seen him. He's gone over 500 kilometres of road. Yes, his is a famous name, an immortal name I should even call it." The crossing at the Desna came back to me again, and I told the General I'd like to see this Saveliev.

"Oh, you'll have to wait. If we have a temporary halt then you'll see him. But now you can't ; he's somewhere ahead with the reconnaissance units."

"What's his first name ?" I asked.

"Alexander Nikolayevich. Why ?"

Then I told the General about my encounter at the hospital. "I believe he's from the reserve," he said, "although he's such a fighter now you'd think he'd been in the army a hundred years. Yes, this must be the man you're looking for."

THAT night I searched my pockets for the paper on which Dr. Savelieva had written her address, and I sent her a few lines saying that her feeling about the signature on the notices had proved correct, and that soon she'd have travelled a thousand kilometres on her own brother's trail. I remember being very pleased with myself at the moment for not having lost the address and having kept my promise, despite my dislike of letter-writing. But before the week was out I regretted it.

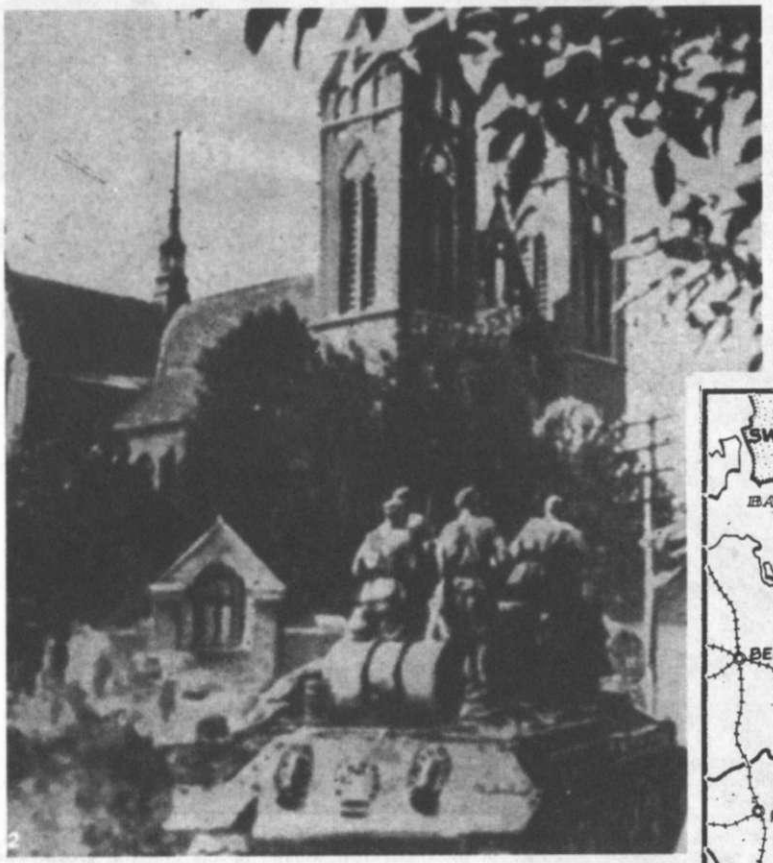
The bridge over the Pruth had not yet been built, but two perfectly sound ferries were plying with monotonous regularity between one bank and another. We were driving up to the left bank when I noticed on the shield of a wrecked German self-propelling gun a familiar notice : "Crossing in order—Saveliev." I crossed the Pruth on a leisurely ferry, and when I reached the opposite bank I looked around for the usual notice. Twenty paces away, at the edge of a precipitous bank, I noticed a freshly-made mound with a wooden pyramid on which someone had evidently expended great pains. Under a five-pointed tin star at the top of the tablet was the inscription : "Here lies Major A. N. Saveliev, who died a sapper's glorious death during the crossing of the Pruth."

Beneath this someone had inscribed in red paint (obtained heaven knows where !) the words that have acquired the lustre of splendid tradition since our first winter campaign in 1941 : "Forward to the west !" Lower down, a square piece of glass protected a small photograph. I looked closer and saw that it was an old snapshot, worn at the edges. It had evidently been carried in a tunic pocket for a long time, but it was still possible to recognize that same little major whom I had seen at the crossing over the Desna.

I lingered for a long time before the memorial. The emotions that stirred me were complex, and I was sorry for the sister who had lost her brother—perhaps before she had received the letter. And then a forlorn feeling came over me. It would not be the same on the roads now without that familiar signature. We waited while the ferry unloaded our cars, then pushed on. Fifteen kilometres distant, at a point where deep banks sloped down on either side of the road, we saw piles of German anti-tank mines, resembling huge pancakes. And on a telegraph pole there was a little piece of plywood with the words : "Road examined for mines—Saveliev."

THERE was nothing supernatural about this, astonishing as it seemed at first. It was simply that here, as in many units which have had the same commander for a long time, the sapper battalion was accustomed to calling itself "Saveliev's." His men honoured their commander's memory by carrying on the task of clearing the road for the army and leaving his name in every section they passed through. There was something of lofty symbolism in this simple action of the men who went ahead.

Soviet Guns Reach the Soil of the Reich



ON THE EAST PRUSSIAN FRONTIER German troops were urged by Hitler to stand firm : retreat before the oncoming Soviet Forces would be regarded as " the gravest of crimes." But the exhortation bore no fruit. On August 17, 1944, Red Army troops led by Gen. Ivan Chernyakhovsky crossed the River Sesupe and reached the frontier north-west of Mariampole, prepared to carry the fight to German soil : their mobile guns are seen (1) passing horse-drawn transport. On the central front the Russians closed in for the assault on Warsaw : tanks carrying infantrymen (2) pass on their way towards the Polish capital. Russian-trained and equipped Polish troops commanded by Gen. Rola Zymierski haul a gun into position (3). Map shows limits of the Russian advance up to August 6. *Photos, U.S.S.R. Official, News Chronicle, Pictorial Press. Map, New York Times.*

Over Guam Island 'Old Glory' Flies Again

FIRST U.S. PACIFIC ISLAND taken by the Japanese, in December 1941, Guam, in the Mariana group, was regained on August 10, 1944.

The sea before Guam was churned to foam as hundreds of U.S. landing craft drove in during the first landing (1). Maj.-Gen. R. S. Geiger, U.S. Marine Corps (2), veteran of Guadalcanal, led the expeditionary troops. Burning Japanese out of a hidden pillbox, a marine crawled ahead with a flame-thrower with comrades behind him ready to shoot (3). "Old Glory"—the U.S. flag—tied to a boat-hook was flaunted in the face of the enemy (4).

Photos Associated Press, New York Times Photos, Planet News

I WAS THERE! Eye Witness Stories of the War

We Opened the Fourth Front in Southern France

British, U.S. and French troops landed on the Riviera on August 15, 1944 —and within a week 2,000 square miles of territory in the South of France had been liberated. Maurice Fagence of The Daily Herald, who was aboard the flagship, tells the story of the preliminary bombardment.

I HAVE just seen the fourth front open in the chilly, misty hours of dawn. We were due to land our first men at 8 a.m. At 8.5 I can write that they are pouring on to the beaches. At this early hour there seems astonishingly little response from the enemy. He may well be lying doggo, but I prefer to believe his coastal defences are either stunned or obliterated by the air-sea bombardment that is still shaking our flagship like a tin toy in a bath.

More than 1,000 Allied ships lurked in the offshore mists when over the loudspeakers came the warning: "Now, here it is," followed by a command that pinned the gunners to the guns and infantry to their stand-by points. American ears paid no undue attention to the first warning. It is the traditional preface to an American naval order, but to us British it sounded a well-chosen piece of Americanism to describe—what everybody engaged in this vast operation believes it to be—the last challenge to Hitler to find reserves to resist the grand assault that is going to finish the war.

Well, here it certainly is. Afloat in a sea aflame with orange fire and acrid with cordite fumes, and semi-stupefied by the roar of it all, I try to sort out my impressions. These ships around me assembled at a dozen different points in the Mediterranean to fox the enemy. For days and nights they steamed. Yesterday, when we were well knit into a monster fleet, Admiral Cunningham and General Maitland Wilson skidded around us in the fastest, slickest British destroyer afloat with the message that what we were going to do is destined to make history, and might prove the final blow to the enemy.

I talked on the bridge with the admiral commanding this particular naval force, which is concerned with the central part of a ten-mile front. "They've promised me bombardment by 1,300 bombers just before the attack, and they've even promised me bombs that make no dust," he said. The first sign of battle came from the enemy-held coast when a signal light hissed into the sky. We were still watching the spot when an American destroyer nearby spat smoke and a shell towards the coast.

British destroyers opened up just as vehemently, then more Americans joined in. Finally the great shadowy shapes of battleships, almost hidden in the mist farther out to sea, began to roar out broadsides. Destroyers sailed up saucily towards the shore and poured in close-range stuff. And those 1,300 bombers weighed in, giving us a close-up picture of what a Berlin bombing must look like. The bombers left, and it was the turn of the rocket ships. They threw sheets of fire that made even the oldest warhorses jump until the noise died down just in time to give our ear-drums a reprieve as the first wave of infantry went ashore.

It is now 9.15, and I hear the voices of beachmasters, calm, confident voices, telling what size boats can now get in with little difficulty. At 9.30 we ourselves ease towards that strangely quiet beach. An American tank lies wrecked on the beach, victim of a coastal mine which our rocket ships failed to detonate. A cloud of dust rises from where a small squat beach-house had stood. Some minutes before, the Germans opened fire from this house on a tiny British flak ship standing offshore.

So a destroyer butted in like a big brother. Just one blow and the column of dust shot up. From a hotel high on the coast that rises to some hundred feet inland a group emerges with a white flag. The weak response of the enemy is astonishing, inexplicable and welcome. As I hand over my message for transmission a hundred prisoners are coming down to our beaches and the seventh wave of our infantry leap from their barges.

I Saw the Mad Colonel of St. Malo Surrender

Having sworn to defend St. Malo, in Normandy, to the last drop of blood, Colonel von Auloch headed an ignoble procession of 605 Germans to surrender—the day after Hitler had presented him with the Oak Leaves to the Iron Cross, which he wore when he gave in. Montague Lacey, Daily Express correspondent, sent this story from the Citadel on August 17, 1944.

A FEW minutes before four o'clock this afternoon, the German commander of the Citadel, Colonel von Auloch, the mad colonel with a monocle and a swaggering walk, led 605 men from the depths of his fortress and broke his promise to Hitler that he would never give in to the Americans. The colonel goose-stepped up to surrender, with a batman carrying his large black suitcase, and another in attendance round him flicking the dust from his uniform, and as they went by an American soldier called out: "What a corney show!"

Colonel von Auloch is the man who wrote to the American commander attacking the Citadel to say that a German officer never surrenders, and for 15 days he sat tight 60 feet below ground in the safety of his underground shelter. By tonight the Americans would have been sitting on top of his fortress, which would have become a mass grave for all the men in it. By holding out, Colonel von Auloch has not affected the course of the war one jot. What he has done is to cause the almost complete destruction of the old town of St. Malo, and sow further seeds of hatred in the hearts of the French.

Even as I write, the townspeople gathered in the Place above are shouting and shaking their fists at the Germans from the Citadel. As the Germans pile into trucks to be taken away, the older men somehow look ashamed and stupid, but the young Germans are still

ASSEMBLED FOR INVASION OF SOUTHERN FRANCE, some 70 vessels of a great armada of ships are here seen at anchor in a port of southern Italy waiting for the order from Vice-Admiral Kent Hewitt, U.S.N., to proceed. Ranging from battleships downward, the invasion fleet included units of British, U.S., French and Canadian Navies, and vessels flying Dutch, Greek and Belgian ensigns. The landings took place on August 15, 1944. See story above, and illus. p. 265.

Photo, U.S. Official

COLONEL VON AULOCH, monocled and swaggering, wearing the Oak Leaves to the Iron Cross —presented to him by Hitler the previous day—leaves the Citadel of St. Malo to surrender, after he had sworn to defend the position to the last drop of blood. The dramatic story of the capitulation commences on page 281. *Photo, Keystone*

grinning and arrogant. The Citadel fell dramatically just an hour before American infantrymen were ready to assault the fortress for the third time, and just as a squadron of Lightning bombers swept in to shower incendiary bombs on the place.

All last night and throughout this morning heavy guns had pounded the Citadel, a main blockhouse surrounded by about a dozen entrances from the mine-like caverns below. The Americans ate their lunch in the wrecked streets before they formed for the attack. At 2.30 p.m. a big white flag appeared on one of the pillboxes. No one took much notice, for at 3 o'clock a fighter-bomber attack was to be laid on. Soon after 3 o'clock the first Lightning swept in. It came down to 50 feet and planted a couple of incendiaries square on top of the Citadel. More white flags were then run up—there were now five flying in the breeze.

The pilot of the second bomber saw them and dived without dropping his bombs. But he opened up his guns as a sort of warning as he flew round followed by the rest of the squadron. The airmen waited long enough to see a batch of Germans come from the Citadel and a bunch of Americans walk up the hill to the fort carrying a coloured identification flag.

Now there was a mad scramble to the Citadel. Word soon went round that the Germans had surrendered. Everyone raced down the hillside to see the sight. First out was Colonel von Auloch still barking orders to his officers and men who were almost tumbling over themselves to obey. Two senior officers were with him, one of them a naval commander. They were all trying to make an impressive display in front of the Americans.

THEN a curious thing happened. An elderly German, a naval cook, broke ranks and ran up and embraced a young American soldier. The German was lucky not to be shot and the guards lowered their guns just in time. But no one interfered when the U.S. soldier put his arms round the German. They were father and son. The German spoke good American slang and was allowed to stay out of the ranks and act as interpreter. He had been 14 years in America, he said, and went back to Germany just before the outbreak of war.

Colonel von Auloch counted all his men as they filed out carrying their belongings. There were Poles among the party, some Russians and about a dozen Italians. Still shouting orders, Von Auloch was put in a jeep and driven away to Division Headquarters. He refused to talk about his surrender and so did his soldiers.

Down in the labyrinth of tunnels of the Citadel there was the usual destruction and signs of panic. Clothing and equipment were strewn all over the place. There was still plenty of food, water and ammunition —and the usual heaps of empty bottles.

Colonel von Auloch's room was in the lowest and safest part of the fort. It was about eight feet by ten feet, and furnished only with two leather armchairs and a bed. It seemed to be the only room with a wash basin and running water.

On the desk stood an electric lamp and a telephone; nearby was a tray containing coffee, and two postcards which the colonel was about to write. I have one of these cards now. It shows a picture of Goering and Hitler smiling as they ride through cheering crowds. On the back is the stamp which the colonel had just stuck on—a beautiful pictorial stamp of a fortress castle.

The big guns of the fort were wrecked, and all the Germans had left were machine-guns and other small arms. With the prisoners who came out of the Citadel was a little party of American soldiers who had been captured last Friday. They had crept up to the fortress at night with explosives in an attempt to wreck the ventilation system.

When all the surrendered garrison had been driven away or marched away, several hundred French people gathered round shaking each other by the hand, cheering and singing their national anthem. And one day, soon perhaps, the Citadel where the mad colonel surrendered will be one of the sights the people of St. Malo will point out to visitors coming here again from England for their holidays.

How Our Buttoned-Down Tanks Charged Through

Described here by News Chronicle war correspondent Norman Clark as "the most motorized army in the world," the U.S. 3rd Army under General Patton was on August 22, 1944, smashing on towards Paris. He tells how the tanks made mad dashes through village and hamlet to force a passage through small pockets of the enemy who might be there.

FOR the most part each large town commanding a road junction is enfolded in the grip of columns that by-pass it to encircle it; when they see this threat developing the German forces defending the town pull out, often to find their escape cut off by our tanks already across the road behind them.

Where the road is long and straight the tanks "button down" their turrets to make mad dashes through some village or hamlet where small pockets of the enemy might be established. This is the quicker way of forcing passages through the enemy.

To bring up infantry and mount an attack on the village as the military manuals say it should be done would take time and give the enemy an opportunity to mine an area ahead and reinforce a strong-point. So the tanks go through like some mad cavalry gallop. Not often are they ambushed. More than once they have charged an enemy anti-tank gun and its crew, coming upon them while they were still camouflaging and sandbagging the position.

In whichever direction you choose to go today the roads of France are hidden under an endless and increasing flood of transport. The cottages and houses which bank the rivers of vehicles shake and quake as heavy tanks, transporters and lorries, piled high with supplies, roll on.

You come to villages where they have not yet raised the Tricolour; others where it is flying for the first hour in four years. You are just a jeep in this procession of moving vehicles. For hour after hour the wheels turn; you are caught, perhaps, between a tank and an armoured car, smothered in the dust and fumes of back-firing exhausts, and must keep your place in the convoy. At night the noise and the spluttering fang-like dynamo sparks from the tank in front of you (you cannot move out of range of the hot blast of its motor) and of returning supply lorries ache your head and your eyes. The nightmare continues through the night.

On the piled lorries men fall asleep while the driver keeps position, his eyes straining to catch the tail-light of the vehicle in front, and alert to brake when the convoy halts. Voices shout at you in the dark, "Is this the road for ——?" "Where is —— headquarters?" But the most motorized army in the world—the U.S. Third Army—moves

GENERAL PATTON, exploits of whose armour are narrated above, was named as commander of the American Third Army on August 15, 1944. In recognition of his spectacular leadership the U.S. Senate confirmed his rank of Lieut.-General, previously withheld on account of a face-slapping incident in Sicily **(see p. 287).** *Photo, Associated Press*

ever onward, one column swirling off down a side road to make more of the highway mileage of France ours. Like streams of quicksilver it darts over the countryside to seize another cross-road junction before the Germans can get there.

In daytime the traffic is four-banked where the road widens. When the convoys are stopped the men fall out of the lorries to fall asleep in the shade of a hedge or tree. The air of this part of France is heavy and oppressive. Along the roads you come upon strange happenings. When we were outside Le Mans we were stopped by a French couple. They were on bicycles, and on pillows strapped to the luggage-carriers were their two children.

The man asked: "Is this the road to Paris?" Yes, we said, but did he know that this part of France was a battlefield in which it was better not to travel? "Oh, that's all right," he replied. "My wife and I cycled from Paris two days ago to fetch our children back from their grandfather's farm near Argentan. They have been staying with him for the summer, and now we're taking them back to Paris because the war is as good as over. We had no trouble getting here."

You find, however, that the next cyclist who hails you will tell of seeing 500 German tanks and many guns on the way from the capital. Which to believe? Farther east as we returned the V-salutes of the villagers we passed 200 buxom women, their hair tied with handkerchief bands, giving us the clenched fist of the Soviet. They stood on rows of benches with the hammer-and-sickle flag behind them, and cheered the onward march of the tanks and big guns rumbling past, the dust-black faces of the drivers and commanders grinning back under their helmets.

We turned into the "Red Hat" restaurant outside which these 200 Russian women stood absorbing the sight of weapons of war moving to secure the destruction of Germany. In the dance hall of what had been a road-house 215 women had their sleeping quarters. Through a Russian-born French interpreter, M. Constantin Politoff, we heard their story as they surrounded us. Four months ago 1,500 Russian women had been seized in their homes around Leningrad, snatched from their husbands and children, and brought to France in cattle-trucks to labour for the Germans.

They had been put to work unloading mines and other war materials from trains shunted into the Le Mans sidings. They had been made to work during bombing raids. We left them dancing in a shack which had been their overflow dormitory, one of the women playing a guitar. Their laughter was free and unsuppressed, and they flung themselves about and chased each other like children. Their German captors had gone—they were watching a column pursuing them back to Germany, and their new-found happiness was unbounded.

IN ORLEANS' PLACE DU MARTOI American troops in jeeps paused to gaze at the statue of Joan of Arc, the "Maid of Orleans." The pedestal is battered but the statue is undamaged, and for the first time in four years there were displayed the Tricolor and flags of the Allies. The town was liberated in General Patton's lightning advance on August 17, 1944. *Photo, U.S. Signal Corps*

OUR DIARY OF THE WAR

AUGUST 16, Wednesday *1,810th day*

Air.—U.S. bombers attacked oil plants and aircraft works in Central Germany. At night R.A.F. bombed Kiel and Stettin and laid mines in Stettin Canal.

Western Front.—In S. France advancing land troops made contact with airborne forces. French Forces of Interior rose in strength over southern and central France.

AUGUST 17, Thursday *1,811th day*

Western Front.—Falaise and Troarn captured by British and Canadians. U.S. 3rd Army occupied Dreux, Chartres, Chateaudun and Orleans.

Russian Front.—Red Army reached frontier of E. Prussia N.W. of Mariampole.

Mediterranean.—Allied bombers attacked Ploesti oilfields.

AUGUST 18, Friday *1,812th day*

Western Front.—German retreat from Argentan pocket towards the Seine heavily attacked by Allied aircraft.

Air.—Allied bombers attacked airfields in N. France and bridges on the Meuse in Holland and Belgium. R.A.F. made heavy night attack on Bremen.

Russian Front.—Sandomierz on the Vistula captured by Soviet troops.

Mediterranean.—Allied heavy bombers again attacked oil installations at Ploesti.

AUGUST 19, Saturday *1,813th day*

Western Front.—French Forces of the Interior rose in Paris.

Air.—Allied heavy bombers attacked oil storage depot at La Pallice.

General.—Heavy fighting continued in Warsaw between Germans and Poles.

AUGUST 20, Sunday *1,814th day*

Western Front.—British troops entered Argentan. Falaise gap sealed off. Toulouse liberated by F.F.I.

Air.—Road and river crossings in France bombed by Mosquitoes by light of flares.

Russian Front.—Soviet troops made progress in S. Estonia, but gave ground south of Riga.

Mediterranean.—Allied bombers attacked oil refineries in Silesia and Slovakia.

Pacific.—Super-Fortresses again bombed district of Yawatta, Kyushu.

General.—Gen. de Gaulle arrived in Cherbourg.

AUGUST 21, Monday *1,815th day*

Western Front.—Allied forces crossed the Seine on both sides of Paris. French troops entered suburbs of Toulon.

General.—Gen. Koenig appointed Military Governor of Paris.

AUGUST 22, Tuesday *1,816th day*

Western Front.—Sens, S.E. of Paris, captured by Gen. Patton's Third Army.

Russian Front.—In double drive on Rumania, Russians captured Jassy and advanced towards the Danube and Galatz.

Italy.—Announced that whole of Florence was in Allied hands.

Mediterranean.—Allied bombers attacked oil plants in Silesia and Austria.

General.—In Paris patriots occupied all public buildings, but fighting continued.

AUGUST 23, Wednesday *1,817th day*

Western Front.—S.E. of Paris Allied forces reached Corbeil and Melun. In Normandy Evreux was captured. In the south French troops occupied Marseilles and U.S. troops reached Grenoble.

Russian Front.—Tilsit, East Prussia, bombed at night by Red Air Force. Akkerman on Black Sea captured by Russians.

Mediterranean.—Allied bombers attacked military installations near Vienna.

General.—Announced that new Rumanian Government accepted Russian peace terms and Rumania would fight on Allied side.

AUGUST 24, Thursday *1,818th day*

Western Front.—Units of French 2nd Armoured Division entered Paris. Allies occupied Cannes, Antibes and Grasse.

Air.—More than 1,900 U.S. bombers from Britain and Italy attacked oil refineries and aircraft works in Germany and Czechoslovakia.

Sea.—Coastal Command aircraft bombed enemy shipping evacuating from Le Havre.

Russian Front.—Kishinev, Rumania, captured by Red Army.

Pacific.—Allied carrier-borne aircraft attacked Padang in Sumatra.

AUGUST 25, Friday *1,819th day*

Western Front.—Gen. de Gaulle entered Paris. Elbeuf, south of Rouen, and Honfleur on Seine estuary, liberated.

Air.—Allied bombers attacked Peenemunde research station and oil and aircraft plants in Germany. At night R.A.F. bombed Opel works at Russelsheim and chemical works at Darmstadt.

Russian Front.—Tartu, Estonia, captured by Red Army.

Pacific.—Heaviest yet Allied air attack on Palau Is. in the Carolines.

General.—Agreements signed between Great Britain and France and U.S.A. and France regarding civil administration in liberated territories.

AUGUST 26, Saturday *1,820th day*

Western Front.—Allied troops across the Seine at four points between Paris and the sea. Paris bombed by Luftwaffe.

Air.—R.A.F. made heavy night attacks on Koenigsberg and Kiel.

Pacific.—Allied air attacks on seven Japanese isles including Yap and Iwo.

General.—Bulgarian Government decided to withdraw from the war. Announced that German troops were being disarmed.

AUGUST 27, Sunday *1,821st day*

Western Front.—Allied forces reached the Marne at Lagny. Toulon cleared of the enemy.

Air.—R.A.F. and U.S. bombers attacked oil plants and railways in Germany.

Russian Front.—Soviet troops captured Rumanian Danube port of Galatz.

General.—Announced that German resistance has ceased in Bucharest.

AUGUST 28, Monday *1,822nd day*

Western Front.—U.S. troops reached Chateau Thierry on the Marne. British secured another bridge-head on the lower Seine.

Air.—R.A.F. bombers attacked flying-bomb sites in N. France. U.S. fighters bombed rail, road and river transport.

Mediterranean.—Allied bombers attacked oil refineries and railways in Austria and Hungary.

Russian Front.—Danubian port of Braila and Black Sea port of Sulina captured by Soviet forces.

AUGUST 29, Tuesday *1,823rd day*

Western Front.—U.S. forces under Gen. Patton captured Soissons, 55 miles north-east of Paris. In the south, French troops advanced through Nimes towards Montpellier.

Italy.—In their advance towards the Gothic line, 8th Army crossed the river Arzillo.

Russian Front.—Troops of the 3rd Ukrainian Army captured Black Sea port of Constanza.

General.—Mr. Churchill returned home from his extensive tour of the Mediterranean theatre of war.

★ Flash-backs ★

1939

August 23. *German-Soviet Pact of Non-Aggression signed.*

1940

August 19. *British evacuated Somaliland, N.E. Africa.*

August 24. *First bombs fell in Central London; 52 raiders brought down.*

August 25. *First British bombs dropped on Berlin.*

1941

August 25. *British and Russian forces entered Persia.*

August 28. *Russians announced that Dnepropetrovsk had been evacuated by Red Army.*

1942

August 19. *Combined Operations raid on Dieppe area, lasting nine hours.*

August 26. *Japanese landed at Milne Bay, New Guinea.*

1943

August 17. *All enemy resistance ended in Sicily after 38-day campaign. Allies entered Messina.*

August 23. *Kharkov recaptured by Red Army.*

THE WAR IN THE AIR

by Capt. Norman Macmillan, M.C., A.F.C.

A FORTNIGHT'S air bombardment preceded the assault on the Riviera coast of France by the forces under General Maitland Wilson. At seven o'clock (first light) on August 15, 1944, heavy bombers and medium and light tactical aircraft bombed gun positions, troop concentrations, strong points, supply dumps, beach obstacles, inland airfields and communication lines. The actual invasion began with the descent of paratroops (see illus. p. 265), who landed in waves of up to 1,000, followed by airtugs towing gliders carrying troops, jeeps, and 75-mm. howitzers. Then came the main force in beach assault craft, their approach to shore covered by aircraft and a naval bombardment of coastal guns (see story in p. 281). More than 14,000 airmen were in the air during the landings.

Allied aircraft quickly secured absolute mastery of the sky above an area stretching from the beach-head inland to 30 and 50 miles. Great forces of bombers smashed rail and road bridges in the hinterland, far up the Rhone valley. The quick success of the air operations in the chosen battle area showed how we have gained in battle experience, through the knowledge acquired from the Commando assaults against Norway, the bitter trial of Dieppe, the attack on Sicily, and the first great Continental invasion in Normandy.

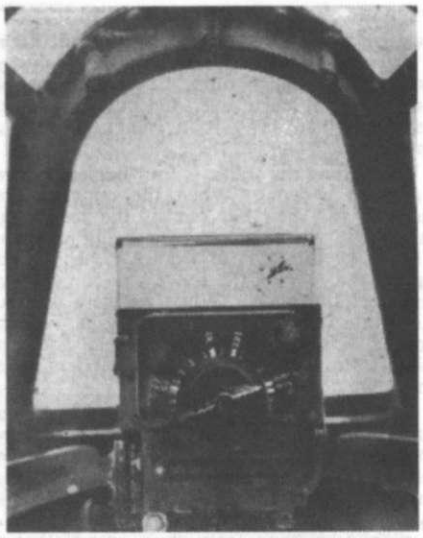
Superimposed upon the organizational excellence of the assault were the newest methods of placing troops just where they were most needed, and covering them with the latest fire-power weapons. During the final five minutes of the pre-assault barrage 14,000 rocket projectiles were fired from ships and aircraft into the Riviera beaches selected for the first beach landing parties.

THE eclipse of the Luftwaffe enables air forces of the United Nations to concentrate ever more strongly against the surface forces of the Wehrmacht. Bombers can carry heavier loads of bombs, and both the Hurricane and Thunderbolt were stepped up to take one 1,000-lb. bomb under each wing. Now the American light bomber Havoc has been stepped up to take one 500-lb. bomb under each wing, thus increasing its bomb-load to a total of 3,000-lb. Without the mastery of the air which had been gained by the constant aggressive action of the fighters and bombers of the United Nations it would have been impossible to restrict the speed and manoeuvrability of the fighter-bombers and light bombers by the addition of bomb load under their wings—where the exposed bombs create additional resistance and add to the outboard weight.

On page 220 I wrote of the probable adoption of an aerial adaptation of the creeping barrage of artillery. It was just such an employment of air power that blasted the way through the defences of the German Seventh Army in Normandy and enabled the Allied Expeditionary Force to break through to victory. The method of application was different from the artillery method only in its timing. The bomb barrage was employed to cover a selected area, into which a high density of bombs was poured—anything up to 5,000 tons. Then the ground forces moved forward. When they were again held up the process was repeated, and by a succession of such blows the German defences in depth were broken faster than it was possible for new defences to be prepared in the rear.

HERE is the outstanding feature of this war. The former idea of defence has vanished. Air attack is now stronger than defence when it has received sufficient preparation in material and in organization. By the employment of air power in the battle area, it is possible to make all the preparations for demolition attack at a distance in safety, and then carry out the destruction in extremely brief time.

So far as is now known, the only security of an army against this form of overhead attack lies in the possession of superior air power. Thus the battle of Normandy is the culmination of four years of air war, during which the Luftwaffe has been beaten from its position of superiority over the battlefield to one of great inferiority. This prelude was not the prerogative of the British and American and Allied air forces alone. The 60,000 German aircraft that have been destroyed on the Russian front during the past three years were a great contribution to Allied air superiority over France. It should be realized that Germany has been fighting in the air on three fronts for three years, and it was the triple effort against foes with increasing air strength that decimated the Luftwaffe.



NEW BRITISH GYRO GUNSIGHT Mark II D, like the tuning dial of a radio set, enables deadly fire to be directed at enemy aircraft whilst opposing planes are both travelling at 400 m.p.h. or more ; with its aid it is almost impossible to miss. *Photo, British Official*

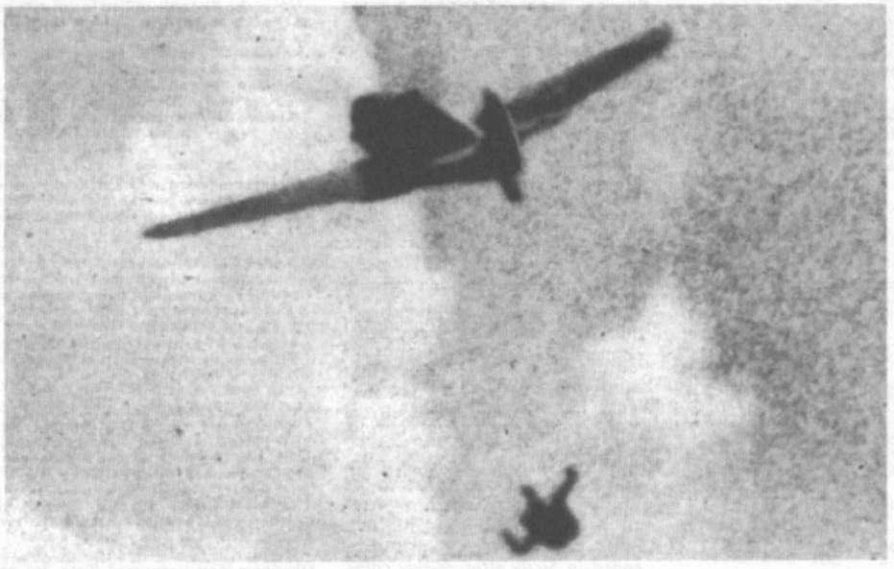
From the beginning of the war until the beginning of June 1944, Germany produced about 110,000 aircraft, reaching peak production in 1942. British aircraft production in the same period was about 90,000. Without Russia and America, British air power would not have equalled German. Russian aircraft output has probably been about 60,000 in the same period ; Russian aircraft losses have been stated as about 31,000. Combined American and British Empire aircraft production from 1940 to 1943 inclusive was 255,000. Combined German, Italian and Japanese production was about 190,000.

In the spring of 1944 German aircraft production was down to an annual rate of about 20,000 (excluding flying bombs, of which 7,250 were fired from the middle of June to August 21, 1944). Moreover, aircraft production in Germany then gave a bias in favour of fighters, unlike the position during the peak year of 1942 when bombers had priority.

FOR 1944 the combined British Empire-American output is estimated at about 140,000. Thus the air superiority of the Allies is a growing one industrially. Meanwhile, the German aircraft factories are being bombed, while Allied aircraft factories are immune from attack. The flood of Allied air power is rapidly growing to proportions which will utterly swamp the German air defences everywhere as the ring contracts about the Reich.

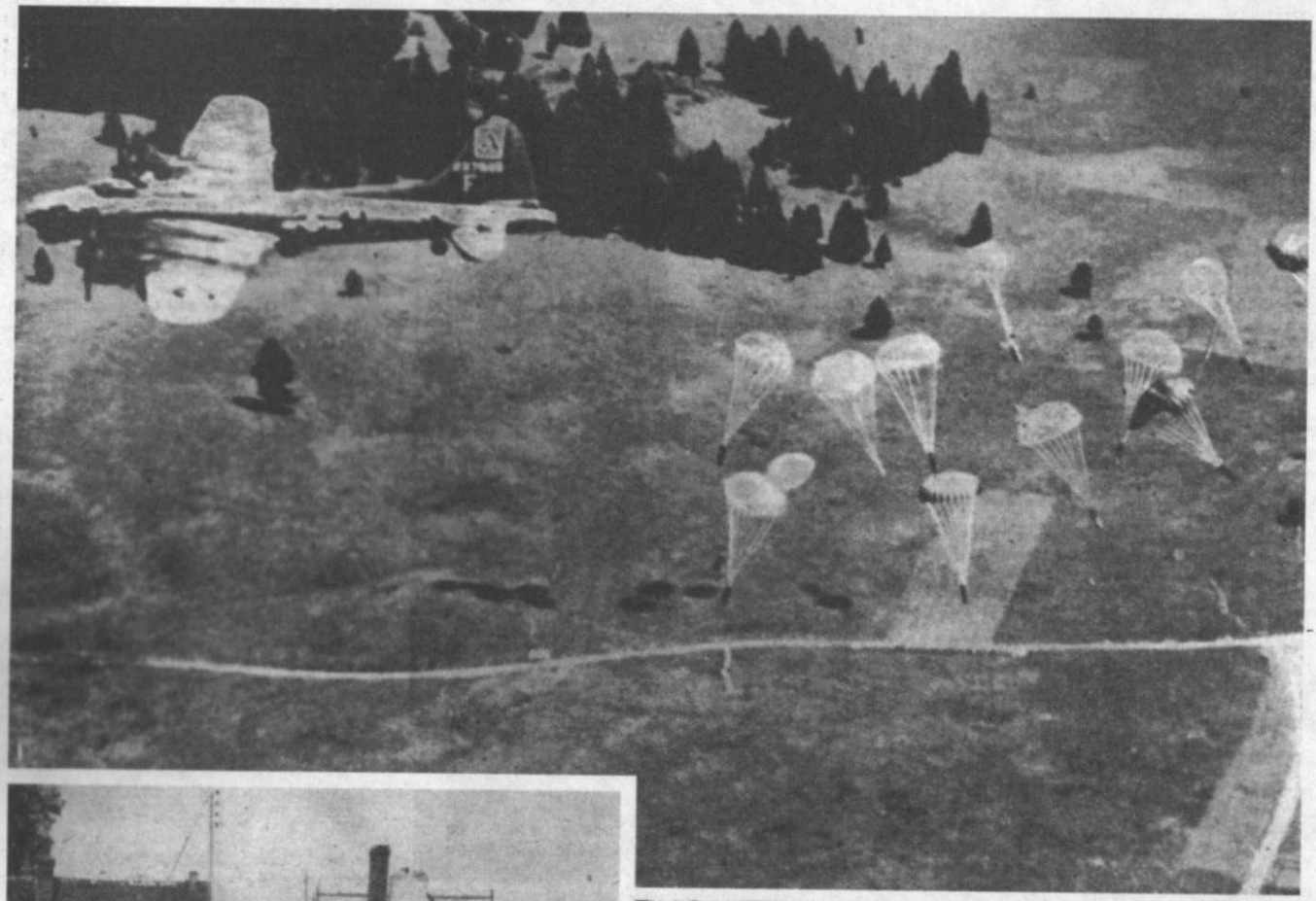
Bearing these figures in mind, it is well to recall the words of General Montgomery in his special message addressed to the armies under his command on August 21, 1944 : " I doubt if ever in the history of war air forces have had such opportunities or have taken such good advantage of them. The brave and brilliant work of the pilots has aroused our greatest admiration. Without their support, we soldiers could have achieved no success."

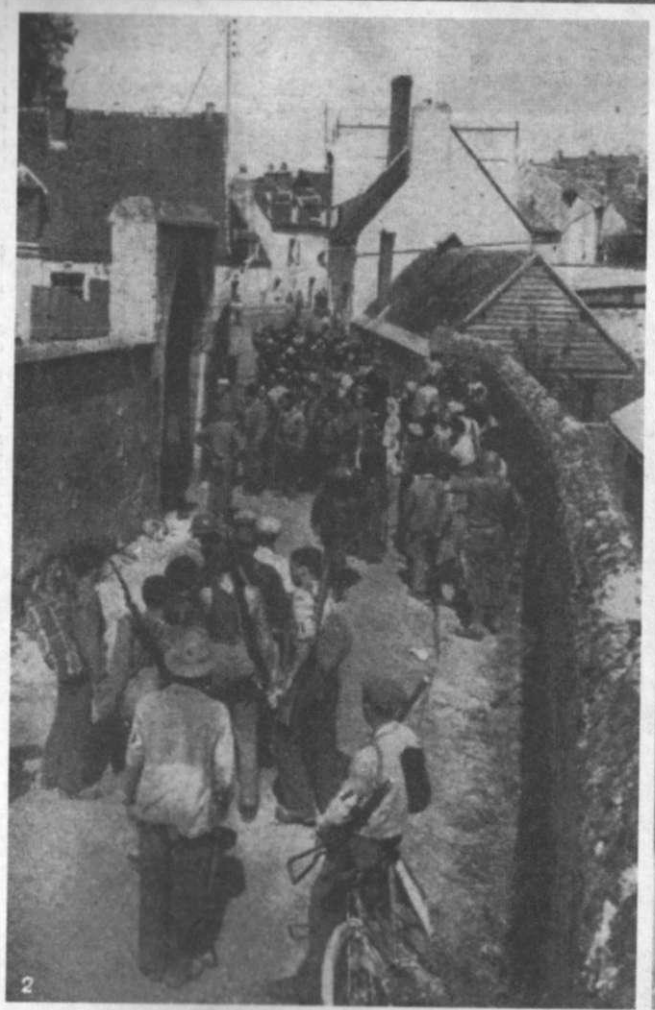
From the South East Asia Command comes the same heartening tale. The defeat of the Japanese in their drive against the Manipur State of India, designed to cut the lifeline to China, was in great measure due to the supply of the Imperial, American and Chinese forces by air. Throughout the Pacific the Allied air might is playing a great part in sweeping the Japanese back whence they came.



THE NAZI PILOT BALED OUT, leaving his ME 109 to be finished off by the Allied fighter-pilot responsible for his hurried exit after brief combat over French territory. The parachute has yet to open, hence the undignified position of the unnerved Luftwaffe warrior who has " had enough." *Photo, U.S. Official*

How R.A.F. helped the Maquis to Set Paris Free





ARMS AND SUPPLIES for the Maquis—secretly raised Army of the French Forces of the Interior—fighting for the liberation of Paris were dropped in large quantities by R.A.F. Bomber Command. American bombers also played a big part in the operations: a Flying Fortress, skimming the tree-tops, sends down by parachute vital packages over the countryside (1): the contents later to be collected by Maquis (2) at a house on the Chateaudun outskirts. Maquis enter the town of Argentan (3), and patrol in F.F.I. trucks (4).

Photos, British and U.S. Official

Wild Beauty Now Covers Our London War-Scars

SUMMER has come to London, and an army of wilderness commandos has invaded City street and suburban avenue. Staunch and sturdy, these wild soldiers are already firmly entrenched. They are at their own particular action stations on the blitzed sites of the Metropolis . . . Dandelion and dock, thistle and daisy, coltsfoot, bindweed, nettle and clover—they have stealthily reclaimed the capital of Britain.

On the cleared London sites that remain as memorials of the Great Blitz is now spread a bright carpet of green, patterned with gold and white and mauve. The pattern changes as one crosses London. In Clapham Park, for instance, there is one damaged site in a residential road that is covered by an almost solid mass of big-headed dandelions. The round yellow tops stand bravely among the bright flush of unmown rank grass. The note they strike in that road of trim front lawns and close-clipped privet hedges is bizarre and garish, yet somehow free and joyous.

A bus ride east, in Chaucer's Southwark, bindweed crawls and clambers over a scattered flooring of loose stones. Across earth now covered by the lowly vine the Canterbury Pilgrims may have passed. Over the cobbles of neighbouring roads the life of the City continues to flow with noisy rhythm, while seedlings thrive in their rich dust.

TO the north, in the bombed side-streets of Islington, couchgrass, as hardy and enduring as the English oak, raises its bayonet-shaped leaf while its long, vivid root burrows deeply into grey earth that trembles when the train shuttles into or out of King's Cross and St. Pancras. Thistles, in purple bloom, have won foothold on the barren spaces that were Kensington houses.

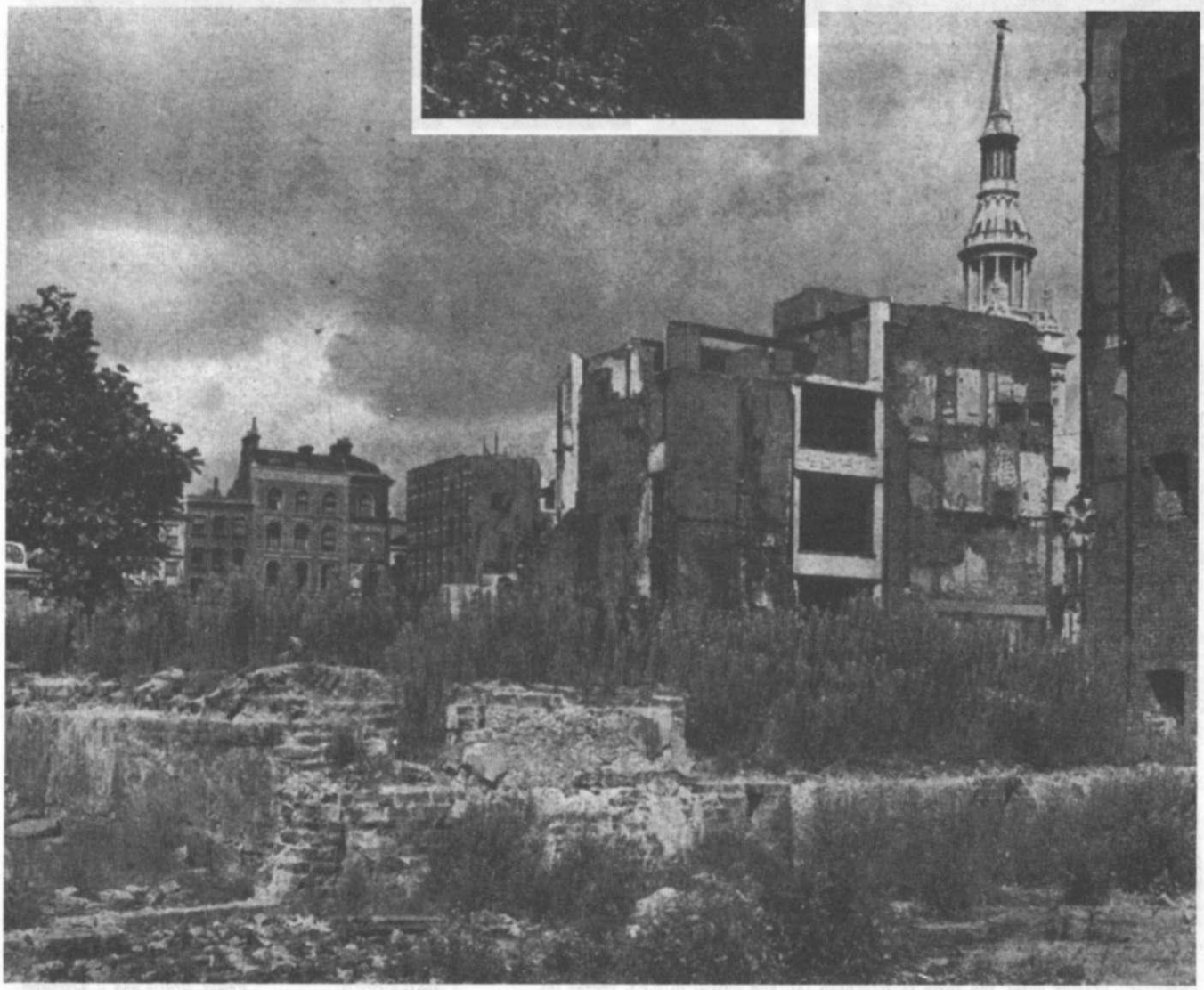
Indeed, there is an unending variety to the evidence of this invasion by Nature. In the drab purlieus of Tottenham Court Road (which somehow succeeds in being never quite English), birds have made their nests behind the bars of exposed fire-grates. Grass shoots are springing along Holborn, once described as the world's busiest mile. No grass had seeded and sprouted there for 500 years. Seedlings have fought for life and won on the torn and scarred slope of Ludgate Hill, which has probably been grassless for seven centuries. It may well be that plant-life has returned to nooks and crannies of London that have not known green shoots since a Roman legion built its camp on the north bank of the Thames.

THE three years that have passed since the heavy raids on London have returned some of the City streets to the state they were in after the Great Fire; the Cockney grasses and weeds have established themselves. Their roots could now successfully defy a hoe. Nor are they to be found only in a few widely-separated districts. Every London borough now has its patches of built-up streets reclaimed by the long-defeated wilderness.

There is more genuine countryside today in many of Central London's back streets than in some village streets in the heart of Britain. It is as though Nature has covered the City's scars with a cooling green salve. There seems an aptness about the whole process, a significance attaching to this casual yet full-scale invasion. The sprouting of seasonal grasses and weeds, embodying, as they seem to, the resilience and pert vigour of the Londoner, has brought colour and hope to the battered streets.

LEONARD R. GRIBBLE

These photographs, specially taken for THE WAR ILLUSTRATED *by J. Dixon-Scott in August 1944, show St. Paul's from Warwick Square, and St. Mary-le-Bow from Watling Street.*



Editor's Postscript

WHEN it was complained to Abraham Lincoln that Grant, the only successful general on the Northern side in the American Civil War, drank too much whisky, Lincoln said, "I wish I knew the brand he drinks, I'd send my other commanders a barrel apiece!" Is President Roosevelt thinking the same about General Patton, who, for all I know, may be a life-long teetotaller? This officer was reprimanded for striking a private soldier in a temper, and the rank of Lieut.-General, to which he would have been entitled, was withheld from him. Then he was given a command in Europe, and gained a place in history by his handling of the American army that carried on such a blitzkrieg as not even the Germans equalled in their conquest of the Continent. Evidently General Patton's ire can be turned against the enemy with the most satisfactory results. Those who advocated his dismissal from the Service must be wondering whether the ordinary rules of conduct ought to apply to commanders of armies. Anyhow, the amazing energy and fierceness of his leadership in France were promptly recognized by the confirmation of his rank of Lieut.-General.

NOTHING will impress future ages more forcibly, when the histories of this war come to be read, than the exactitude with which the date of the United Nations' readiness to strike was predicted. Perhaps "predicted" is not the right word. It was not a guess or a prophesy: it was a calculation. When Mr. Churchill said early in 1942 that by 1944 we should be in a position to begin driving the enemy out of occupied Europe, sighs of dismay went up. Few people believed the war could last that long (because they did not want it to!). But those of us who were admitted behind the scenes of the great show that was being prepared knew the Prime Minister had given that date after long and close collaboration with those who were directing the preparation. Full time had been apportioned for turning out the material and the munitions required, for training the troops, for weakening Germany's output of war machinery. Plans were drawn up two years in advance for the strategy that was to be followed. And since the invasion of Normandy, at the beginning of June of this year, the carrying-out of those plans has been steadily proceeded with.

TO whom the credit for this long and patient build-up of a force that should be irresistible will be chiefly given by historians we cannot tell. Much of it to Mr. Churchill, much to General Eisenhower, a good deal to General Montgomery, though he came into it only after his brilliant Desert and Tunisian campaigns had been completed. What a contrast with the absence of planning that had such an unhappy effect on our war effort last time! Haig was no planner. Pershing came in too late to do much in that line. We had no one at home like Mr. Churchill to keep up an unceasing demand for plans and the means to operate them. Until Foch took over the supreme command there was really no strategy on our side at all so far as the Western Front was concerned. Outside his soldiering Foch was not an intelligent man. He said in 1919, "Germany is finished. There is no longer a Germany." But he had a first-class military mind, and his hammer-blows made Ludendorff quail and give in.

HOW well the British and American Governments have been kept informed about what was happening in France I realized better than I had done before, when I had a talk a few days ago with a Frenchman who had been back and forth between this country and his own some dozen times. A braver soldier of freedom than this peacetime professor does not exist. Wartime professor, too, actually, for he kept his chair at a French university while he was doing his valuable work for the cause. For a long time no suspicion fell on him. Then he was caught. Arrested in his home, he looked on while Gestapo agents searched for incriminating documents. He knew they would find plenty. 'In an hour," he told himself, "I shall be dead." But then he thought he might as well die kicking, so with a sudden rush he upset a heavy desk on to the policemen, ran into another room, jumped out of a window, and hid in a garden not far off till pursuit died down. He knew what to do then. In a marvellously short time a British plane landed in a field, picked him up, took off again, and brought him to England. Sounds incredible, but it is true!

ANOTHER interesting talk I have had was with an expert in psychology who replies to questions sent in to a woman's weekly paper. It seems that nearly all these questions are now concerned with sex problems. Innumerable wives ask for advice because they have ceased to love their husbands or because they think their husbands have ceased to love them. Large numbers have had babies while their husbands were far away on active service. Unmarried girls piteously tell how they have been promised marriage by soldiers of one or other of the Allied armies and have somehow discovered that these men have wives in their own countries. There is nothing new or surprising in all this, the psychologist assured me. Such happenings are a concomitant of all wars. Between 1914 and 1918 the same cries for help went up. Unfortunately, in very few cases can any real help be given. Still, if those who seek it feel that the answers they receive show understanding and sympathy, their minds are to some extent relieved and they are given more courage to face their difficulties.

Lt.-Gen. L. H. BRERETON, former commander 9th U.S.A.A.F., was appointed, on August 10, 1944, commander of the First Allied Airborne Army. This consolidates airborne troops—including British, United States and Polish—of the Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Force.

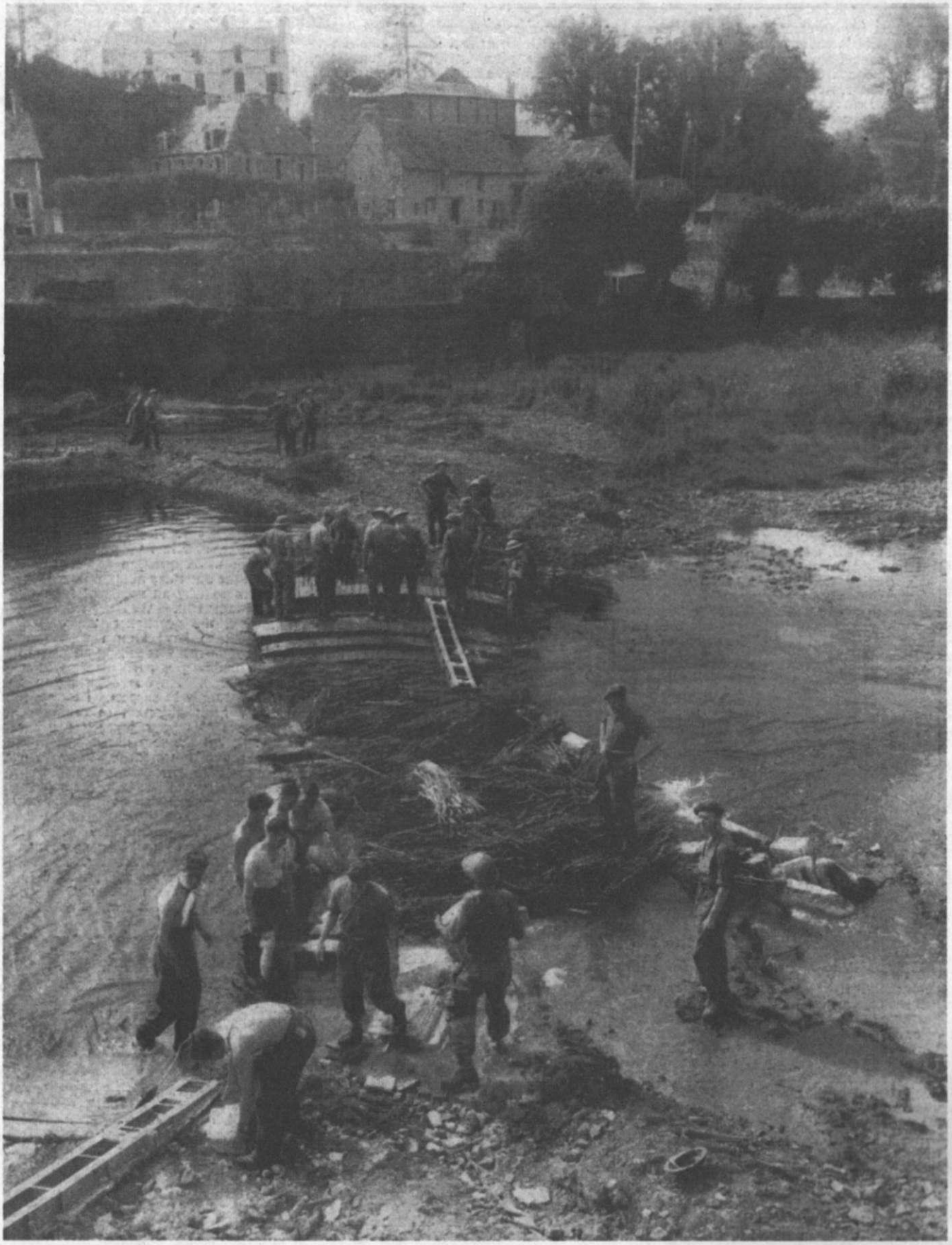
Photo, U.S. Official

WE often hear that there is too much centralization of government and that local authorities are not given enough scope. But lately I have been noticing a number of cases in which local authorities have been getting into trouble with the law. For instance, the Corporation of Battersea in London were fined £20 for heating a greenhouse at a cemetery, where people buy flowers to place on graves. Then the Brighton J.P.s nearly broke the Motor Fuel Regulation which forbids unnecessary use of petrol. A woman summoned for some trifling offence failed to appear before them, and the magistrates on the Bench said "Send a car to fetch her." She lived six miles away! The magistrates' clerk stopped that. In Hampshire the police authorities have come into conflict with the legal profession. They have recently been themselves instructing barristers to conduct police prosecutions. Barristers with the support of the Bar Council, their trade union executive, say this should be done by the legal officers of the Crown. It is good to know that watch is kept on this kind of activity by persons "dressed in a little brief authority."

ON the other hand, there is a growing tendency to resent what are perfectly reasonable, and in fact necessary, inquiries by officials. A question was asked in Parliament the other day about a Board of Trade query as to why an applicant for an alarm clock wanted it. Was such investigation permitted, the questioner wanted to know. He ought to have known without asking that anyone really requiring an alarm clock would readily give particulars as to why it was required. Anyone objecting to do so would naturally be suspect. I cannot myself see any great objection to asking railway passengers "Is your journey really necessary?"; but the very idea seems to arouse most people's worst passions. Another instance of interrogation which is more naturally resented has been the subject of a parliamentary question. Inspectors on London Tube railways have been in the habit of asking anyone whom they suspected of trying to defraud the Passenger Transport Board where they worked and what they earned. They have now been told to stop this. Mere suspicion does not justify such queries, the Home Secretary says.

NEWSPAPER readers frequently comment on the number of misprints in wartime journals. This is due partly to the more than usually hurried conditions in which newspapers have to be produced, and partly to the additional strain put upon the meticulously careful "reader" in the newspaper offices. The duty of the "reader" is to go through all the proofs, having the "copy," which is the original, read out to him and correcting mistakes that compositors may have made in "setting it up." These Correctors of the Press, as they call themselves, are thoroughly competent and it is rare for misprints to get past them. The story of the "battle-scarred veteran" who was turned into a "bottle-scarred veteran" came from America, where less care was taken. One of the funniest errors I have noticed lately was in a news item about a question to be asked in the Commons by Sir Ernest Graham-Little. It ended with the statement, "Sir Ernest Further asks whether Mr. Willink" will do so-and-so. Compositor and reader must both have thought there was an M.P. named Further!

How We Crossed the Orne at Thury Harcourt



ROYAL ENGINEERS in working "undress" paved the way for British and Canadian troops advancing on the village of Thury Harcourt on the River Orne, south of Caen in Normandy. They are here preparing the foundations of a ford across a narrow neck of the water by laying fascines, or bundles of tree-branches. These will support the wooden track already being laid on the far bank. The village was finally cleared of Germans by August 15, 1944.

Photo, British Newspaper Pool

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